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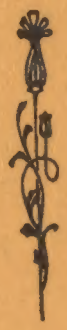
Swan River Vignettes

By

F. A. TWILLEY

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Vignettes

R. A. TWELEY

THE LAST GOLD RUSH

Among the first buildings to go up in a new town would be a livery barn. Not necessarily in the back street either, but quite often on Main Street. No one minded the smell of horses, most everyone carrying a fair amount of the pleasing odor on his own person.

Arriving in town, whether putting up his team in the barn or not, the farmer would make for the livery barn to get the latest news from home or abroad. The doctor would have a team in there ready for instant call. Doctors went to the patient in the early days no matter what the weather or the season, and most of the boy babies would be sure to bear his name. The vet, too, had his horse and rig available for ready use and could be seen, armed with a few horse balls, hurrying out to a severe case of colic or packing a couple of pounds of epsom salts for an ox that had broken into a wheat granary.

On a Saturday, during the winter, every available space would be utilized, and for a few cents a team would be taken care of while the farmer and his wife did their shopping.

There was a time, however, when the livery stable shown here was filled to capacity, but not with horses. Men were sleeping in the mangers, stalls and alleyways and up in the quarters above. It is quite possible old Albertans living today were among those who came to the village of Minitonas during the great gold rush of 1909. It is often said that the Klondyke saw the last gold rush, but it had nothing on this one for excitement though it produced more of the precious metal.

The livery barn in the horse days was about the most important place in town. Besides caring for man's best friend, the livery barn was a place to get the news and to meet old travelling friends.

A man named Jack Elliott and his wife, farming two miles east of the village, were dressing turkey for the Christmas trade, when they discovered gold nuggets in the crops of some of them. Attempts to keep the matter from becoming known proved unavailing and men, and women too, armed with axes and shovels, popped up from all over the valley. The report from the assay office to which the pellets were sent, proved that the nuggets were but brass. Nobody believed Jack when he told them, so he let them go ahead as it was bringing lots of business to the village.

The claim staking went on and every train brought in shoals of gold-hungry men. From all over the North American continent and even from overseas the news that gold had been discovered rapidly spread. One chap in particular seemed to be very lucky in finding gold, a certain local horse trader. He had a real nugget that he carried about with him as a souvenir from the Klondyke and he would dig up a pan of dirt and find this little ball of gold quite often. He enjoyed the excitement it caused among the spectators.

I did not stake a claim myself as I was not in need of money at all, getting thirty dollars a month and board at a nearby village working as a clerk in a hardware store, but I encouraged

others to take advantage of the opportunity to get rich. In the store one day, three fellows, the blacksmith, the station agent and the elevator agent were laughing at the whole thing and said that they were not so foolish as to believe there was anything in it. I thought that they should be convinced so I slipped over to the railroad track just before mail time and picked up a few tiny pieces of coal. I dabbed a little gold paint on them and, together with a letter supposedly from a friend on the spot, put them in the store window for all to see. The next morning all three of them were away to the gold fields.

The situation got to be very serious as every train brought in more and more people. Food became very scarce and accommodation was unavailable to the many thousands arriving, and winter now on. The police took a hand and met every train at the cities and stopped would-be miners. Some farmers from the valley that had gone down to a farmers' convention at Brandon had difficulty in convincing the police that they merely wished to get home.

What had really happened was, that when the old telegraph line was built in the '70s from Selkirk to Battleford, wire and fittings were stored at various places along the route. One of these caches had been located on this farm. It had burned down and the brass and copper parts had melted. The turkeys had picked up the bright little pellets.

Not until nine miles of stakes along the gravel ridge had been driven in did the wild business come to an end and peace reign once more.

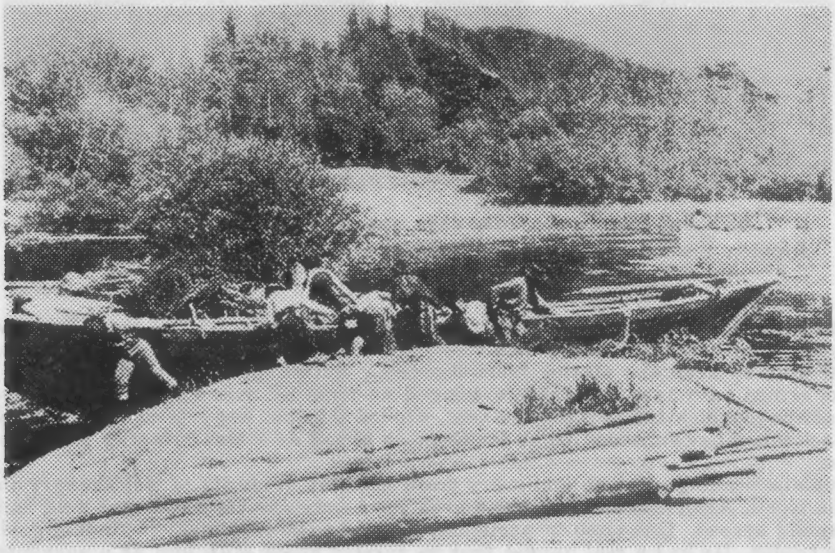
YORK BOAT HIGHWAY

When the Hudson's Bay Company found that to keep a fair share of the furs coming their way instead of into the possession of their rivals, it was necessary to go after them, there arose the problem of transportation.

The birch-bark canoes of the natives while possessing many advantages, chiefly that of lightness in portage, were too fragile to withstand the wear and tear of heavy use. Making them bigger and stronger, even up to a capacity of 2½ tons, did not altogether solve the difficulty.

So we learn Sir George Simpson, the Governor of the H.B.C. was the first to introduce the inland or York boat to supplant the canoe. These were built with a capacity of from 3 to 4 tons and were manned by a crew of 9 or 10 men, a steersman, bowsman and 8 crew members. Equipped with sails for favorable winds and boat lines, and track lines for ascending rapids and battling strong currents, they filled the bill. Four to six of these boats comprised a brigade.

From York Factory (so called because of the manufacture of many trade goods there) down the Hayes River to Norway House, along Lake Winnipeg to Fort Garry, would go these strong, sturdy craft, carrying goods and supplies to the posts along the way and returning with



Lugging the heavy York boats through the shallows and around the rapids was a back-breaking job. Yet this was Western Canada's chief means of bulk transportation in the early days . . . and at that, often more dependable than the jets of today.

furs. Others would, as in the picture, sail west from Norway House, to the Shoal River and into Swan Lake, and up the Swan River as far as Fort Pelly.

These voyages took many months. Many times, coming along the rivers, cargoes had to be unloaded when difficulty was encountered, and the boat pushed along by man-power until high water again. In dry summers, sand bars would be met with, with little or no water to float the vessel.

The late Angus McKay, an officer with the Hudson's Bay Company, wrote that, "a York boat crew of nine men could load or unload a cargo of four tons in the space of 3 to 10 minutes. Some of the portages were 10 to 12 miles long. Each boat crew had to deliver its cargo at the other side of the portage. The allotment to each man was one-eighth of a cargo, or 190 pounds to each trip."

The method of carrying was with a portage strap across the forehead, with the first package securely fastened with the strap ends, so as to rest on his back, and upon this others were placed the amount he could carry, the packages resting on his back. The steersman, whose duty it was, placed the second lot upon the first, the former held in place with one hand, and well loaded, the boatsman would dart away at a half run for the length of the portage. If a man was unable to do his part by reason of sickness or other cause, he simply had to call upon his friend or fellow to do the job for him for a consideration.

For a few dollars a month, the coarsest of food, often no shelter from bad weather, no social life, it sounds like a very disagreeable mode of living, but the men could be found to do it.

As trade increased both ways, supplementary means of transport were evolved and the Red River cart made its appearance for overland travel. The boats were met at the mouth of the lesser rivers and carted the rest of the way.

We can still see the deep ruts made by these carts in places where land along the trails has not been cultivated. Indian hammers and other tools are found, along with the white man's things, such as knives, bells, etc., lost along the way. Recently a farmer picked up a 45-calibre revolver with 3 undischarged shells in the chamber. It was badly pitted and it makes one wonder whether it was just lost or what might have happened to the owner. I have it, along with many other such things in my museum.

All of the past. The Iron Horse is so taken as a matter of course that we give little thought to the men that endured hardship without almost any return. How different today.

THE SWAN RIVER DOUKHOBORS

It is perhaps not generally known that among the first settlers in the province now known as Saskatchewan were the Russian Doukhobors. They belonged to a spiritualist community known as the "Dukhobortsy" or "Warriors of the Spirit" and were fiercely religious.

They came to Western Canada in 1898, about 4,500 of them. A third went to Yorkton, others to Rosthern and about 1,500 to the Swan River Valley.

When woman's work was never done.

Why the government of that day did not enquire a little more fully before inviting or allowing them to emigrate here is hard to understand because it was common knowledge that fervent religious community groups do not assimilate readily and keep up their customs and language for centuries. It seemed that fifty years or so ago any class of emigrant was welcome except the English.

The first thing the conductor on the train that was to carry me across the country said as I boarded it from the ship was, "That the country did not want any more d——d Englishmen." In Ontario where I stayed off for a while, the green Englishman was good for a laugh any time, and coming further west, the Winnipeg Free Press and the Telegram shamelessly carried advertisements stating that "no Englishman need apply."

The Doukhobors have proven very disappointing as settlers simply because they wish to live as they have always lived since becoming free from serfdom in communities or mirs in which everyone shares alike.

When they first came here to Swan River in 1898, they were housed in large tents and food was provided by the government. They made themselves wooden bowls and spoons and a half dozen of them would eat out of the same bowl.

Landing at Cowan, the end of the steel at that time, they were 65 miles from the land set apart for them and most of the men went ahead to erect buildings, just over the border of Manitoba in what was then known as the Nor-West Territories.

The government had what little baggage they had transported to the two townships along with flour, tea, etc., paying the other settlers ninety cents a hundred for the job of carting stuff all those miles with no roads to speak of and three rivers to ford.

However, the Doukhobors soon had things organized, taking stones from the Swan River and making mill stones to grind wheat, growing flax and hemp for fibre. Unlike other settlers, they formed themselves into villages, thirteen in all and worked as much land as needed and went on to work for other settlers for small wages and were welcomed.

We laughed at them when we first saw them on account of the peculiar way they dressed. Looking at some old pictures of ourselves at that time, especially on a Sunday, when we used to visit them at the villages, with our bowler hats and leg-o'-mutton sleeves, I wonder what we had to laugh at?

Their houses were spotlessly clean, their white headdresses always white and clean, their bread baked in open ovens, having a fine, rich smell to it, made visiting them a treat. They had a fine sense of humor. We all liked them very much.

The first time they gave trouble was in 1903 when they destroyed the horses' harness, burned their clothes and paraded in the nude. I don't know why. Perhaps the government was beginning to insist on them doing their homestead duties instead of living together.

In 1907 when the Saskatchewan government got rough with them they went to B.C. and all their hard work and improvements went to ruin and their hopes dashed. That is why they are now appealing to the UN for redress. Perhaps if they had been dealt with more understandingly, things would have been all right. Many that I know of have become canadianized. Young Frank Verigen, grandson of Peter Verigen, their one-time leader, attended normal school, got married to a Canadian and is now a teacher somewhere in Manitoba.

The picture of the Doukhobor women pulling the plow was taken in 1900 when the land agent went out to see how they were getting along. It was not so much a case of dire necessity as the fact that they did not believe in causing animals to do hard work which they could perform themselves. They modified this somewhat and had quite a few horses when they left. Good, well-fed horses too, 300 of them. But they were mindful of dumb creatures. Would not kill pigs or any animals for food. Lacking meat they made up with butter and at threshing time I would see them reach out and take about a quarter of a pound to the consternation of the housewife.

Well, I liked them, had lots of fun with them. I hope they are not made too unhappy and find it quite refreshing to know that there are people in the world who can think of other things than how to make big profits out of other people's hard work.

PRAIRIE BANDS FOR PRAIRIE TASTES

Music hath charms to soothe, but whether to assist in tranquilizing the west or to relieve the tedium of barrack life in a lonely spot, some musical members of the newly formed N.W.M.P. formed a brass band. This band was formed in February, 1876, and made its first appearance on the Queen's birthday, May 24th. It was at Fort Livingston on the Swan River.

Evidently the authorities were not musically inclined as we learn that the men had to buy their own instruments and have them shipped from Winnipeg by dog train. Quite proud of their band, it was in evidence a few months later when it accompanied the treaty commissioners, along with the mounted escort, to the Indian encampment for the signing of the Carlton treaty.

John Peter Turner, in his chronicles of the force, tells us: "Moving of headquarters from Livingstone to Fort Macleod put the band in a disorganized state, but it was rejuvenated at Fort

R.N.W.M.P. Band at Fort Walsh, 1878.

Calgary and placed under bandmaster Sgt.-Major Lake in time to be of service at the signing of the treaty with the Blackfoot and Stoney Indians, along with a few fragments of other tribes. This event took place on the banks of the Bow River, 60 miles east of Fort Calgary. Over all the noise of chanting of ceremonials, barking of dogs, neighing of ponies, could be heard the stirring music of this wonderful Police band."

Now with "F" troop at Fort Walsh, the band gave many concerts at which theatrical performances, and even negro minstrel shows were staged. How astonished at all this the natives must have been.

Following the success of this first band, other bands of a semi-official nature came to be organized. Can we imagine the feelings of the garrison, who, under Inspector Dickens, had fled from Fort Pitt during the rebellion of '85, when worn and haggard from the voyage down the icy river, saw the welcome uniforms of the police on arrival at Battleford, and heard the strains of music from a band, waiting to escort them to food and shelter.

The next record of a brass band in these parts was in 1906, when the new-born town of Durban formed one. Though a member of this "organization" I cannot recollect how we procured our instruments. I do know that only one member knew a note of music, the rest playing by ear. As a result, a popular tune would receive variations that the composer would not be capable of ever thinking up.

It was our custom to sit on the roof of the box-car that did duty as a station, from which vantage point we would render sweet music such as is now carried over the air by radio. A dear old lady still living where she has lived for 60 years, about two miles east of town, told me quite recently that she loved to hear the sweet strains coming to her over the air waves.

The villages were not so appreciative. One evening, about midnight, as we marched up the main street playing our theme tune, "Here Comes A Sailor," suddenly a shot rang out just as we were passing the bank building. As it transpired, it came only from a 12-gauge shotgun, but at that time of night it sounded like a 25-pounder. The village butt of many a joke (an old soldier of the Queen), who lived opposite the bank building, thought that it was a demonstration for his benefit, and came out in his shirt-tails to expostulate, which he did in barrack-room language.

When the shot was fired it caused the bandsman who played the B-flat bass (Phil Zinger) to drop his heavy instrument onto the toe of another player causing him to let out a yell. Had he been shot?

At this juncture, coupled with the noise of enquiry from the gathering villagers in varying stages of deshabille, a second shot rang out. It seems that the bank manager had been awakened from a peaceful sleep, and half in fun and half in annoyance had taken his shotgun to add to the general uproar.

After this episode, the band attended strictly to business, lending its services when asked, at concerts and picnics, but its esprit-de-corps was broken.

THE SHEEP DOG OF THE LOG DRIVE

The "Wannagan"—a floating cook-house, timekeeper's office, supply depot, and the sheep dog of the log drive.

This vessel is not named the "Queen Mary" though it is like it in some respects. You can obtain just as good a meal on it as on the big ship, though without menu or table napkin. You can also buy things you may wish to. On the liner there are silk dresses, perfumes, and jewellery for sale as a service to its passengers. The river craft has as counterpart a supply of overalls, boxes of snuff and tobacco and, in case you may lose a button, a tin of horseshoe nails.

Log jams like this have to be sorted out in the spring if the wood is to arrive at the mill for cutting. Bringing up the rear the "Wannagan" helped release stranded and caught logs along both banks until the lake and the mill was reached.

The "Queen Mary" is expected to last for 30 years after which it will be sent to the scrap heap no matter how seaworthy it may appear to be. That is, unless a war breaks out when it may be allowed to be in service longer. After 30 years, insurance companies will not risk money on ships.

About 30 days is the life of the "Wannagan" and its first voyage is also its last. This scow is a floating cook-house, timekeeper's office, supply depot, and could be termed the sheep dog of a log drive. Loaded with tents, blankets and provisions, it takes to the water at the start of a log drive and brings up the rear until all logs are safely delivered to the mill. As men are working on both banks of the rivers it sails along, it sees that they are fed and takes them along when their job is done.

As will be understood, the winter cut of logs have all been brought out of the bush and piled on the river banks. As soon as the ice goes out and just before the flood comes down, the logs are dumped into the water. "Beat" crews have already been at work along the course to remove any trash pile-ups or ice jams that might result in impeding the progress of the logs on their way to the lake where the mill is situated.

The "Wannagan" follows along, loosening up any stragglers that have come to rest in eddies or held up in any way and pushes them into the current. A nasty job at times, with icy spring rains and sleety snow. Dangerous, too, everything being slippery. If a man gets hurt he is picked up by the scow and attended to.

Arriving at the mill, the timekeeper is ready with the men's time, all paid off and the colorful and perhaps enjoyable business is over until the time comes to go through another winter session. These northern Caandian rivers, the Red Deer, Etomami, Bowsman, Woody and Swan were all the scenes of such as this, and for 25 or 30 years provided work for hundreds of men. Pretty well a thing of the past around here now and lumbering is carried on in but a small way.

In any case, the lumberjack, a skilled and plucky fellow, is now almost a legend as, where lumbering is carried on, machinery has taken over. Caterpillars and hoists have no bones to break.

BEARS I HAVE KNOWN

Although every man's hand is against them and the country has been intensively farmed for almost sixty years, the bear still persists and has become aware of the fact that a bee-hive neatly placed in a nice dry position and containing lots of bees and honey is much nicer to locate than having to hunt for the wild variety, also a field of oats provides a welcome change of diet, especially welcome if alongside a nice berry patch.

This valley has always been a bear's paradise, growing everything that a bear needs and thick with large trees along the many rivers. The black poplar not having much value as timber

Left to right: Billy Williams and Dan Campbell, Manitoba bear hunters.

or fuel and often ready to fall over and make a huge hole in the ground, saves the animal a lot of digging when ready to den up for the winter.

The Indians did not bother the bear very much. There was always plenty of much more to be preferred game around and the black bear was not so easily stopped with bow and arrow.

When the Hudson's Bay Company began to reach out for good bear hides in order to supply a demand from the military for use as hats for the guards, the white trappers began to hunt them. I heard of one man around here that used to trap them with success and look them over. If the hide didn't come up to expectations he would contrive to set the animal free. Whether he expected to catch the animal again for another appraisal or whether he did not want to kill needlessly, I don't know, but one day, when looking the bear over, it made a lunge for him. He stumbled on backing up and the bear took off his hat and a bit of his scalp.

My first experience was when I first came to this part. I had bought a cow with a three-month-old calf. I turned them out to run with other homesteaders' cattle and mine used to come home at night.

One night it didn't come home and next morning I went to hunt it up. I saw where there had been a scrap and the cow was there but the calf was missing. I could see where it had been attacked and dragged into the bush. Following up the trail, I found the remains of the calf.

Enlisting the aid of a neighbor, we went in search of the bear, but on nearing the scene I hesitated. I said to my companion what the neck-tie said to the hat, "You go on ahead and I'll just hang around."

Not that I was afraid. Who would be afraid of a bear! I merely did not want to get too far ahead because I was using a Snider rifle and old-timers know what they looked like. The barrel was so long that if I had got too close to the bear I would have been obliged to back up again in order to shoot.

However, we did not see it. Many times lately they have destroyed bee-hives and make a thorough job of it. They not only eat the honey, but they also eat the bees and lick up the ground all about the hive after smashing the hive to pieces. They will destroy four or five in a night. In an oat field they will stand on their hind legs and gather an armful of standing grain and nibble away.

They do not sleep very sound in their dens during the winter, and quite often some of us have dropped a tree on their den not noticing they were there. They come out quite lively to see what the game is.

Long time ago a neighboring homesteader, who used to be a school teacher in England and did a little of it in this country too, was milking his cows in the yard. One day as he was milking, the cow became restless and acted as if she was going to bolt. Noticing one of his boys, as he thought, standing at his back, he ordered him in a loud voice as befits a school-master, to go to the house at once.

Looking back to see that his order had been obeyed, he was surprised to see a bear slinking away with its tail between its legs.

Isaac Cowie, in his book entitled "Company of Adventurers," tells of a happening at the time he was working for the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Pelly. (The Swan River district extended at that time as far west as Fort Pelly which is now in Saskatchewan). He tells of Colonel somebody whose name I cannot recall coming up to Fort Pelly in 1873 to make arrangements for the establishment of a headquarters for the newly formed N.W.M.P. While he was there, a party of H.B.C. employees and others arrived at the fort from the Red River settlement.

They were asked by the Colonel if they had encountered any buffalo or other game as they neared the fort to which they replied that all they had seen was a bear and not so very long ago.

Upon hearing this the Colonel mounted his horse and loaded his rifle and took off in the direction given. It was not long before the people at the fort heard shots, and shortly after saw the officer returning, looking rather glum.

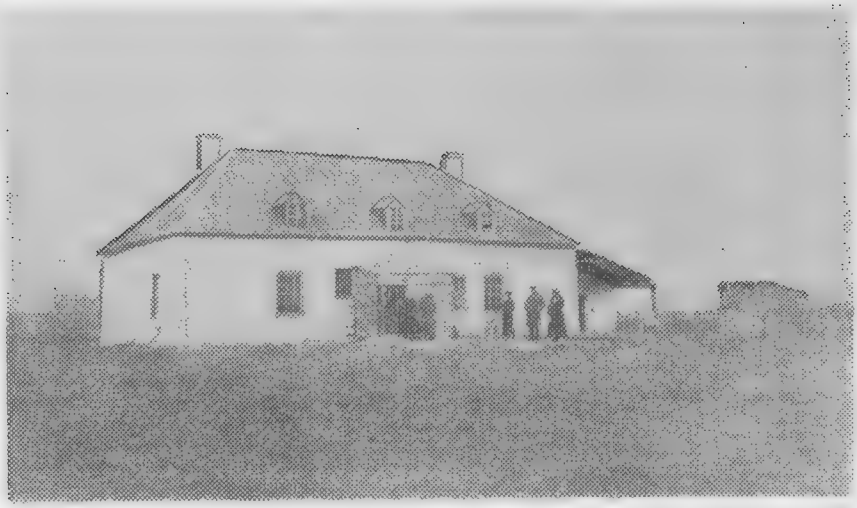
Had he missed? No, he had been too successful. Had shot one of the Company's oxen in mistake for the bear.

It cost him ten pounds, that made him sad, but the occupants of Fort Pelly were delighted as it would mean a change from the everlasting pemmican, and they hoped he would come again some time.

THE LOSS OF FORT PELLY

In the early part of the last century, with rival companies and free traders reaching out for the furs of the natives, many forts and trading posts sprang into being, some of a substantial nature and others of a part-time character. No less than 25 of them within a small radius around the sources of the Swan and Assiniboine rivers.

One of the most important of these, to be used for almost 75 years, was Fort Pelly. Situated on the upper reaches of the Assiniboine, and belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, it did a tremendous business, not only in furs, but in salt from the north brought down by dog team from Salt Lake and distributed to all points including the Red River settlement. In maple



Once a thriving and impressive centre, surrounded by a high stockade of sharpened poles, the old Hudson's Bay Post of Fort Pelly was soon bypassed by the tide of progress and was abandoned soon after this photograph was taken in 1907.

sugar, thousands of pounds of it, and in pemmican, acceptable equally as much as furs, for use by the Company's employees.

Trade goods from York Factory came to the fort up the rivers and along the well-beaten Pelly trail.

Early pictures of the fort show a high stockade of sharpened pole stakes all around the buildings with a look-out platform and a board walk around the top of the palings along which a kilted piper marched at break of day to herald the morn. We can imagine the effect on the Indians when hearing it for the first time.

Most everybody that was anybody in those stirring early times, Governors, Explorers, Generals, and a few lords and barons found shelter at various times under its hospitable roof.

Then in the early '70s, what excitement as the men and horses of the newly-formed North West Mounted Police went trooping past on their way to their new quarters a few miles away. To hear of the establishment of the North-West Council close by and of connection being made to link up with the telegraph line and be in constant touch with the outside world.

Little remains today to mark the site of old Fort Pelly which at one time was the hub of a thriving business in furs, salt, maple sugar, pemmican, and all the other necessities of pioneer life. It was in 1881 that the first big paddle steamer churned its way up the Assiniboine River to give the Fort a special importance.

To look at the Assiniboine today one could not imagine a big paddle-steamer getting very far up its winding course, but one memorable day, July 9, 1881, the "Marquette," 125 feet long with a 30-foot beam, built by that pioneer in transportation and lumbering enterprises, Peter McArthur, its powerful engines puffing columns of smoke, electrified every living thing around Fort Pelly by arriving there. What breath-taking excitement!

As the tide of progress advanced westward, Fort Pelly lost its importance, but hung on precariously until the railway from Swan River to Regina went by in 1907, and gave the post its quietus. It was abandoned shortly after.

We say abandoned. Worse than that. No attempt was made to save any records or anything of interest for posterity. Blown in all directions by the four winds went papers that would prove so interesting to read today.

What has become of all the doors and windows and the very logs that were the substance of the well-built fort and its outbuildings? Not a sign to show that here stood a famous fort at which history was made.

For a few years the chimney stood up against the sky defiantly alone, but at last came tumbling down and now people travel past the place entirely unaware that anything was ever there. All that remains is a pile of stones and mortar.

A couple of young fellows found in the ditch close by, just a few months ago, what proved to be a press for baling furs; a very valuable piece of historical bric-a-brac.

How could such obliteration take place in so short a time? We are too near to the romantic past to fully realize its importance.

THE PIONEER PARSONS

We used to sing a hymn that contained a line, "Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease?" Nowadays we take our religious exercises under very pleasant conditions, a drive on a good road in a closed car to a warm church.

Sunday morning services in the early days were not exactly rosy in the winter time as we arrived at the school house to warm it up after it being without a fire over the week-end. Quite often the one with the door key would be a bit late and someone would have to crawl through a window to gain entrance. The preacher would arrive by horse and cutter, half frozen with icicles hanging from his moustache if he had one. The seats and organ would be swung around to near the stove and the preacher would have to make a start still wearing his sheep-lined coat with the collar turned up. Most often the room never did get warm enough to be comfortable and the service had to proceed to allow the reverend gentleman to attend his other appointments of which there were always three or four and many miles apart.

Roads just merely trails and icy rivers to ford, these were, if not hardships, very unpleasant and uncomfortable experiences not realized by us today. Even so, the country parson of 50 or 60 years ago did not know what hardship was compared to the missionaries who attended to the

The "sky pilots", as they were oft en called in the early west, knew all about the hardships of the trail. Here, one travels from meeting-place to meeting-place, by dog-sleigh.

spiritual needs of the people of a century or more ago. There was always an abundance of food in pioneer days, the settlers made sure of that. It was not so before the plow was put to work. Though the prairies were dotted with herds of buffalo and the woods were home to moose and deer, it was not always possible to ensure that scarcity would not be felt and circumstances be such that actual starvation become a possibility. Many reasons for this state of affairs could be given some of which will be at once apparent.

Here are a couple of letters that give some idea of what the early missionaries of the church in the west had to contend with, the shortage of food in addition to the fear of sickness without benefit of proper medical care, the hostility of some natives and the possibility of being lost in the trackless country during bad weather. As we know some lost their lives from all of these causes at one time or another.

The shortage of food was an ever-present source of worry. The following letter I have before me, was written from Shoal River and dated January 31, 1855 (107 years ago). The writing is hardly discernible as can be understood after over a century. Letters in those days were not enclosed in envelopes or stamped, but were folded and sealed with wax and dispatched by runner or by anyone likely to be going in the desired direction.

To W. J. Christie, Chief Trader, H.B.C., Fort Pelly.

Dear Sir—Having obtained leave by the Lord Bishop of Rupert's Land to apply to your district for any assistance I might require, I beg leave to make application through necessity for a supply of provisions, viz: 90 lbs. pemmican, 150 lbs. dried meat, 60 lbs. grease, a wrapper and a felling axe. Please charge the same to the Church Mission, Red Deer River.

Sir, wishing you health and prosperity, prays—your obedient humble servant,

James Settee, Senr.

P.S.—Please also to supply my man with provisions for journey.

It was feast or famine in those days when the buffalo or deer were not always where they were expected to be and a letter from the same missionary to the same never-failing source shows that at that time, things were really bad. This letter is dated February 21, 1860.

To A. H. Murray, Esq.

My Dear Sir—I am sorry to tell you that our provisions this morning are perfectly exhausted. Had our dogs been at home we might have remedied this evil, but it is all owing to that and now we shall have no other resource to fly to but to our cow or ox unless you will be kind enough to supply the Church Missionary Station with some provisions, either to be returned or charged to the account.

I am your obedient servant, James Settee, Senr.

P.S.—I charged my double-barrel gun with a bullet to each barrel and went to the byre, but I found my ox rather poor and it would be a loss to kill it, so afterwards made bold to write this note.

The Hudson's Bay Company was indeed a life-line to any in need whether white man or red, and the N.W.M.P. often had to avail themselves of aid from the many forts that were indeed like oases in the desert.

THE ERA OF THE OXEN

If you think for one moment that these oxen are going to start moving as soon as you say "Get up," you are sadly mistaken. Nothing will happen to anything or anybody. That cow-bird will continue to sit on the back of the off ox. The second word of command will cause a slight flutter. Someone has spoken or did the wind blow? The third, however, if accompanied by a touch of the stick with a nail at the end of it will put the patient beast in motion.

Patient, did you say? How about the little maid doing a bit of homework after school hours? She must be patient. Good practice for her, though. As a wife she will be used to a little stubbornness and be accustomed to asking three times before a little necessary job is done.

For a long trip on a short road and a long day's work with little to show for it, you could not beat the ox. Why not put off until tomorrow what you can do today?

They had their good points, however. (These fellows are all points. Not much chop for them those days!) Compared with the horse the ox may not be considered intelligent, but he had much more commonsense. He would not run away at a piece of flying paper or kick if the doubletree touched him. I have never heard of anyone being killed or hurt while driving oxen. They would not rear and plunge if the breaking plow met a stubborn root. They would stop and find out what you wished to do about it. If you decided to lift the plow out and jump the root, all right. If you wanted to take a good pull at it, okay. They could take it when horses could not.

I remember one time when I was doing a bit of breaking for a neighbor settler who was anxious to get a bit of land in use near the house for a garden. Nearing the house during one round, my oxen stopped in their tracks and would not budge. No matter how I yelled and whooped they stood still. There was nothing in the way of roots or stumps to stop them so I lambasted them with a stick. Nothing doing. Upon investigation I was amazed and scared to see a little kid

of three years old, fast asleep in the furrow in front of the oxen. I dread to think what might have happened had I been driving horses. Not that the parents would have missed the youngster for a while. They had so many kids they would not have noticed, but I would have hated to have been the cause of perhaps a fatal injury.

The best way to cool off on a hot day is to go and stand or sit, as the case may be, in a slough of water. I have done it many a time. Not willingly but under compulsion. The oxen will leave the furrow and make for the cooling water whether you will it or no. You can either wait for them to come out and go plowing again or ride the plow in with them. One day I sat in three feet of water for about 20 minutes and on coming out, took off where we left off. A heavy shower of rain soaked me down to where the slough water left off, so I had to turn homeward.

One of my neighbors had a buggy but no horse. His wife refused to pull it so he had to hitch an ox to it when he wished to go to town. Now you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make it drink, and so with an ox. He would lead the ox to the trough before hitching up, but it would seldom take any. On the way to town, however, coming to the bridge across Minitonas Creek, it would take off down the bank to partake of the refreshing water and often stand in the middle.

The first winter I drove oxen, something like fifty years ago, I used them for hauling dry poles and green cordwood to town. It was slow business going to town with a load but much slower coming back. I could walk much faster than they and no amount of urging would cause them to increase their speed. Other men with horses would call out to me in passing. One day, throwing the hind bob over the front one and tying up the lines, I left them to come home by themselves and took a ride with a fellow having horses. It worked fine. I was able to warm up the shack, cook my supper, set out some hay for them and do a bit of reading. They always came home, always that is, until one night they didn't. Still missing next morning, I went in search of them. They were placidly chewing the cud about half a mile off the road, at a straw-stack.

Well, oxen had their day and are gone now and with them have gone the good manners and the courtesy of the road. Never have I known an ox driver to dash past a pedestrian on a wet day and splash him all over with mud. Never would he pass a man or woman on foot, if he could catch up to him or her, and not offer a ride. Who, nowadays, tearing along in a high-powered car is able to see what is going on in the world and be able to tell a field of wheat from one of oats or barley?

With oxen you could look with pleasure at a rich field of wheat as it came into the shot blade, on your way to town, and see it unfold and begin to head out as you came home.

And when their span of life neared its close though it seems unkind to mention it, they could be sold for as much as you paid for them, gracing the tables of rich and poor alike—juicy steaks, sweet and tender as a woman's heart.

Pioneer farm power.

MOOSE I HAVE KNOWN

A first glance at this picture would seem to suggest that old Santa Claus has had one of his engines conk out on him and has been forced to make an emergency landing. Further study, however, reveals that it is merely old-timer Walter Barry providing himself with his winter supply of meat, and now settled down to enjoy a pipeful of Bull Durham tobacco after a tough tramp through the snow.

Old-timer Walter Barry—looking for all the world like Santa Claus—sits on the carcass of a newly-felled moose while filling his pipe for a well-earned smoke. What a fine animal is a moose and how much better they look alive than lying dead in the snow.

The moose does not stand much of a chance against a high-powered rifle, being of a size that presents a fine target to the hunter. He could always hold his own against his natural enemies until man came along, those horns and powerful hooves making short work of wolves or bears at close quarters. No depth of snow would bother him, as he was not dependent on grass like the buffalo or deer, but found his feed off low bush and scrub.

Supposedly a timid animal, I never found him so when I first came to Manitoba. I have often seen a couple of them lying down like cows and have yelled at them to get going. Often in the night they would walk around the shack and rub against it, as evidenced by the tracks made in the snow. The Indians seldom used a rifle against them, for the reason that the noise and smell of firearms would drive the game away, as it did eventually. After all, the bow and arrow in the hands of a skillful huntsman was a deadly weapon, and though metal arrow points largely took the place of stone ones, the latter can still be found on the farmer's fields.

A moose in full cry is a fine sight. It is surprising how quickly they can travel through the trees with those massive horns as they lay them back on their shoulders. Not a pretty animal as good looks go, but beauty is hard to define. They are graceful and proportioned and any other kind of face than the one they have would look odd.

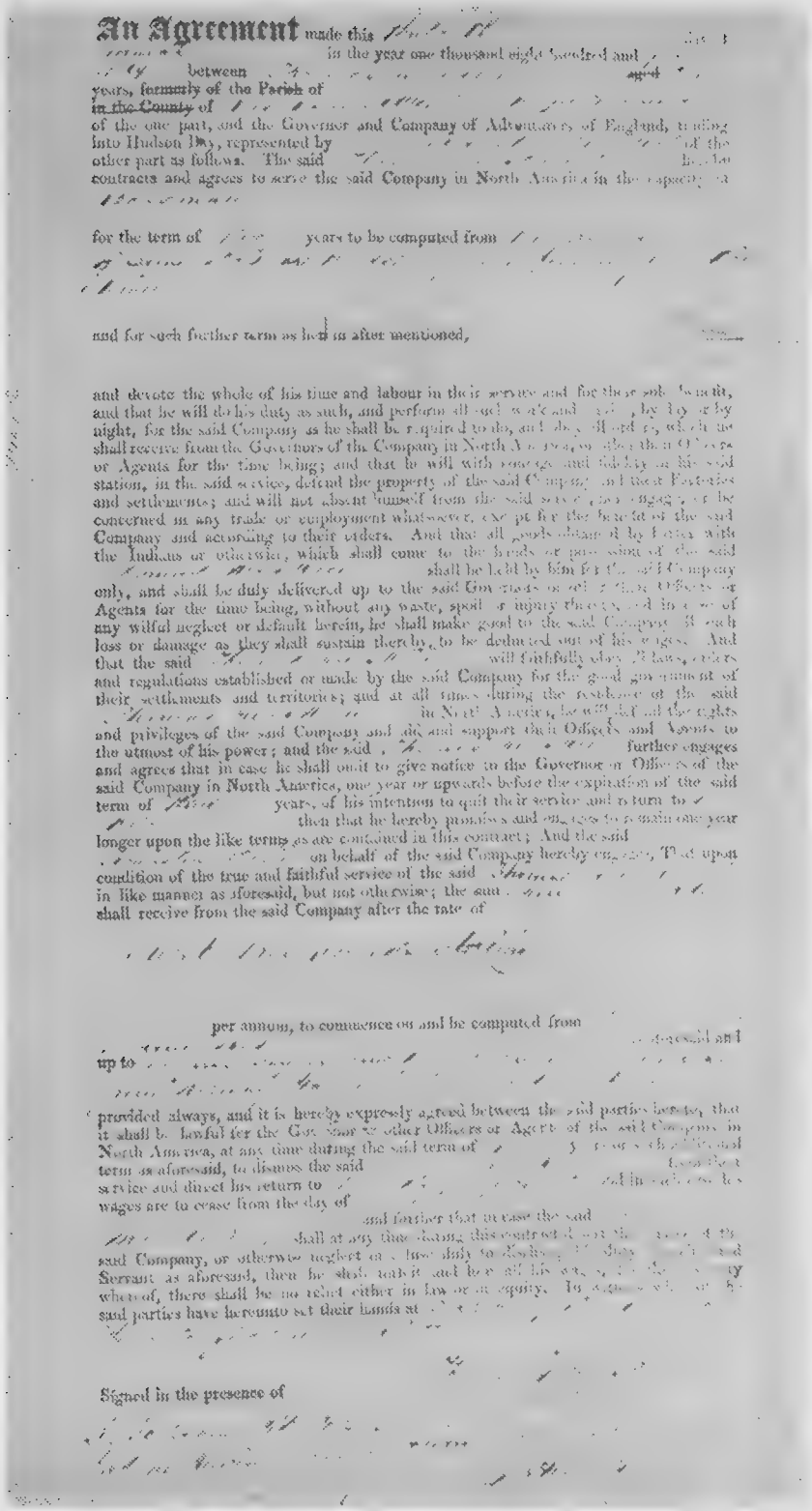
One time a party of hunters took me along with them to the mountains in quest of moose, but I must have jinxed them as they did not get any. My duty was to blow on a bottle that had the bottom of it knocked out. When properly manipulated it could be made to imitate the plaintive cry of a lovesick cow moose calling to its mate. I am not suggesting that this fine bull moose responded to my call, though it is a fact that a moose did show up and come within shooting distance of where I sat on a log. As it happened, those nimrods were not around at the moment and were dismayed when I told them.

What a fine animal is a moose and how much better they look alive than lying dead in the snow. How strange it is that the horns drop off after the sex battles are over, to grow again bigger and better the following year. A good pair will weigh up to 60 or 70 pounds.

THE BOWSMAN'S CONTRACT

This document, dated 13th of March, 1856 (one hundred and five years ago) is an agreement between the Hudson's Bay Company and a young fellow named Thomas Macklin, aged twenty, who has agreed to work as Bowsman for the said company. The Bowsman supervised a river boat.

The term is for three years and he promises to "devote the whole of his time and labor in



An Agreement made this [illegible] in the year one thousand eight hundred and [illegible] between [illegible] aged [illegible] years, formerly of the Parish of [illegible] in the County of [illegible] of the one part, and the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England, trading into Hudson Bay, represented by [illegible] of the other part as follows. The said [illegible] contracts and agrees to serve the said Company in North America in the capacity of [illegible]

for the term of [illegible] years to be computed from [illegible]

and for such further term as he is after mentioned,

and devote the whole of his time and labour in their service and for their sole benefit, and that he will do his duty as such, and perform all such acts and things, by day or by night, for the said Company as he shall be required to do, and obey all orders, which he shall receive from the Governors of the Company in North America, or other their Officers or Agents for the time being; and that he will with courage and fidelity at his said station, in the said service, defend the property of the said Company and their Factories and settlements; and will not absent himself from the said service, or engage, or be concerned in any trade or employment whatsoever, except for the benefit of the said Company and according to their orders. And that all goods obtained by barter with the Indians or otherwise, which shall come to the hands or possession of the said [illegible] shall be held by him for the use of the Company only, and shall be duly delivered up to the said Governors or other their Officers or Agents for the time being, without any waste, spoil or injury thereto; and in case of any wilful neglect or default herein, he shall make good to the said Company all such loss or damage as they shall sustain thereby, to be deducted out of his wages. And that the said [illegible] will faithfully obey all laws, orders and regulations established or made by the said Company for the good government of their settlements and territories; and at all times during the residence of the said [illegible] in North America, he will defend all the rights and privileges of the said Company and aid and support their Officers and Agents to the utmost of his power; and the said [illegible] further engages and agrees that in case he shall omit to give notice to the Governor or Officers of the said Company in North America, one year or upwards before the expiration of the said term of [illegible] years, of his intention to quit their service and return to [illegible] then that he hereby promises and engages to remain one year longer upon the like terms as are contained in this contract; And the said [illegible] on behalf of the said Company hereby engages, That upon condition of the true and faithful service of the said [illegible] in like manner as aforesaid, but not otherwise; the said [illegible] shall receive from the said Company after the rate of

[illegible]

per annum, to commence on and be computed from [illegible] and up to [illegible]

provided always, and it is hereby expressly agreed between the said parties hereto, that it shall be lawful for the Governor or other Officers or Agents of the said Company in North America, at any time during the said term of [illegible] years above mentioned, or term as aforesaid, to dismiss the said [illegible] from his service and direct his return to [illegible] and in such case his wages are to cease from the day of [illegible] and further that in case the said [illegible] shall at any time during this contract [illegible] the said Company, or otherwise neglect or refuse duly to perform [illegible] Servant as aforesaid, then he shall forfeit and lose all his wages [illegible] whereof, there shall be no relief either in law or in equity. In witness whereof the said parties have hereunto set their hands at [illegible]

Signed in the presence of

[illegible]

This copy of a historical document represents the contract which bound an employee to: The Governor and the Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson Bay.

their service and for their sole benefit, and that he will do his duty as such, and perform all such work and service, by day or by night as he shall be required to do—and that he will with courage and fidelity in his said station, defend the property of the company, and their settlements, etc."

He is not to absent himself from the said service (such as going off on a buffalo hunt maybe, millions of such animals roaming the plains) must take care of all goods obtained by barter with the Indians or otherwise that shall come into his hands, and be delivered up without spoil or injury, and in case of wilful neglect or default herein, he shall make good to the company all such loss or damage, to be deducted from his wages.

His wages, by the way, are shown to be 23 pounds sterling per annum. He has to buy his own clothes of course, but his food will be supplied I imagine. It will not be such as we would be satisfied with in this day and age but will be substantial—pemmican, flour, biscuits of some sort and tea, brown maple sugar, etc. Likely fowl and fish would be picked up on the voyages up or down the river.

Twenty pounds odd per year does not seem like a lot of money but what use was money in those days. Anyhow, the rest of the crew only got paid eight pounds a year and worked a lot harder when it came to having to portage. I would imagine a bowsman on a boat brigade was about the best job going for a young fellow a century ago. As for food, the people in England at that time, believe it or not, were much worse off. The poorer classes were getting wages of about 11 shillings a week and supposed to raise a family on that. Bread was one shilling and four pence a loaf and tea was out of the question. A bit of toasted bread with water poured on it was the tea most poor folk had, and a bit of meat or a herring once a week was a luxury. After the repeal of the corn laws, bread dropped to one-third of the price and people began to live much better.

The time this young fellow signed up with the fur trade company was perhaps the golden age of the west. No railways to scare away the buffalo, no Mounties to make the Indians toe the line, free to come and go where one wished. There would be days when the life of a voyageur would not be so pleasant, cold, rainy days, snow and sleet, but they doubtless were tough men and took it all in their stride.

To see the world as it was then known to them, on the voyage from the Red River Settlement to the York Factory on the shores of the Hudson Bay, with every bend of the river having something different to offer in scenery and in wild life, must have been worth living for and the job of being a bowsman in charge of a boat along with other similar boats that formed a brigade, was a much to be desired one.

ABANDONED POLICE CAMP

The lonely spot on which this cairn stands was a very lively place in the early '70s—brass band, variety music hall, daily newspaper—the works.

Not a soul around there today and questionable if more than a handful of people apart from historians know of the place. However, its place in history is assured on account of its being the site of the headquarters of the newly-formed North West Mounted Police and the home of the first government of the North West Territories. It was here that Lieut. Francis Dickens (son of the famous novelist) as well as many other noted members of that force, joined up and received their pill-box hats.

Fort Livingstone is, or was, about four miles north of the present town of Pelly in Saskatchewan and 45 miles west of the present town of Swan River in Manitoba. It was built on the south bank of the Swan River.

Regarding the headquarters of the police, a site close to the H.B.C. post of Fort Ellice had originally been chosen and erection of huts and stables authorized, but the conviction grew that a site near the company's post at Fort Pelly, 90 miles to the north, would be better, it being served by a good trail. More important still was the fact that Fort Pelly was on the then projected line of the C.P.R. which would mean direct contact with other points. Moreover, it had the advantage of being in a wooded area. Consequently the Minister of Public Works caused the erection of the proper huts and stabling for 15 officers, 170 men and the same number of horses as well as a residence for a stipendiary magistrate.

It is hard to imagine a more unsuitable place for a police camp. A few miles to the south or north would have made some difference as the site chosen was open to the cold south-west winds of winter, was stony, the way down to the river was long and steep, and the place was at the junction of the Swan River and Snake Creek.

Commissioner French, reaching the new barracks with "D" Company on July 7, 1875, was not impressed with the location any more than he was on a previous visit. The buildings had been

put together hastily and with green lumber and the few troops occupying them the previous winter had suffered hardship. Hay, so necessary to a mounted force, was not to be got handily and the stony ground meant little cultivation.

However, the construction of the buildings was completed in 1876 and Lieutenant-Governor David Laird and his council established themselves in residence. Thus was launched the first essay at government of the vast northern territory and history was made.

Why was this historic site abandoned so soon and all the work and labor spent in vain?

As we have seen, the site was unsuitable but the main reasons were that the government at Ottawa had changed, and the railway was going to be built more to the south, thus isolating the place. Also the headquarters of the police force was too far away from the scene of most trouble, namely the international border, where constant raids from marauding Indians engaged in horse stealing, American whiskey traders invading the country and many other causes for trouble kept the tiny police force busy. In addition, settlement was advancing westward and government must follow.

The snakes helped the government to change its plans too, according to a story attributed to the daughter of the publisher of the famous "Saskatchewan Herald," (P. G. Laurie):

"John Grieves Oliver, son of the Hon. Adam Oliver of Ingersoll, who ranked high in the councils of the Federal Government, had his own theories.

"It appears that John Oliver and his construction party were resting from their labors in the spring of 1875, the Swan River barracks duly completed, when their attention was called to an unusual circumstance some 400 yards distant.

"Investigating they noted that the earth in three small depressions over an area of approximately 30 feet long and 4 feet wide was literally moving. Soon the horrible truth became clear. The government's building had been erected near a snake den.

"With the advent of warmer weather they had only to move a stone or boulder in the vicinity to uncover garter snakes by the hundreds, many of them interwoven in a sickening mass, like yarns in a ball.

"Swiftness of decision in the face of a problem characterized John G. Oliver. He divided his men into teams, ten a side, offering a prize of ten dollars for the team that caught the greatest number of snakes in twenty minutes.

"The highest score was 1,136, not counting some small ones. Notifying the government of this, the order came to move on west and the cavalcade left for Battleford to begin the work all over again."

Not much of a spot for habitation. Today the region is used as cattle pasture. Anyone trying to find this cairn would have to walk a few miles without any guiding sign posts unless the government of Saskatchewan has done this necessary work. Probably so, as they generally look after such things when attention is called to them. However, when this picture was taken we had to crawl through more than one barbed-wire fence. During the Saskatchewan Jubilee celebrations in 1955 a couple of historians came up from Regina looking for the place and never got there. They were treed by a bull that was not the least historically minded and the men, after a long spell amongst the branches, lost interest in the quest.

LYNX LORE

As long ago as 150 years, Daniel Harmon, a trader in the employ of the North-West Company, remarked on the plenitude of game in the Swan River Valley, he having lived here for five years and near starvation part of the time as his Indians would not always hunt for him.

He mentioned the lynx in particular as being plentiful on account of the number of small animals on which it preyed for a living.

Of all animals, the lynx is the easiest to shoot not being overstocked with brains. In meeting danger they act just as an ordinary cat would, taking a couple of short runs and

climbing the nearest tree instead of turning about and making itself scarce as any other animal would do.

No glory in shooting a sitting duck and to shoot a lynx crouching among the branches of a tree is the poorest of poor sport, giving the animal no chance whatever of escape. How, then, to go about it?

How much more sporting it would have been if these two fellows in the picture had taken along a bag, and on treeing a lynx, had proceeded in the proper manner. One of them to climb the tree and grab the animal by the tail and fling it down to his companion waiting below with the open bag. Tricky work, of course, but with success well worth the effort.

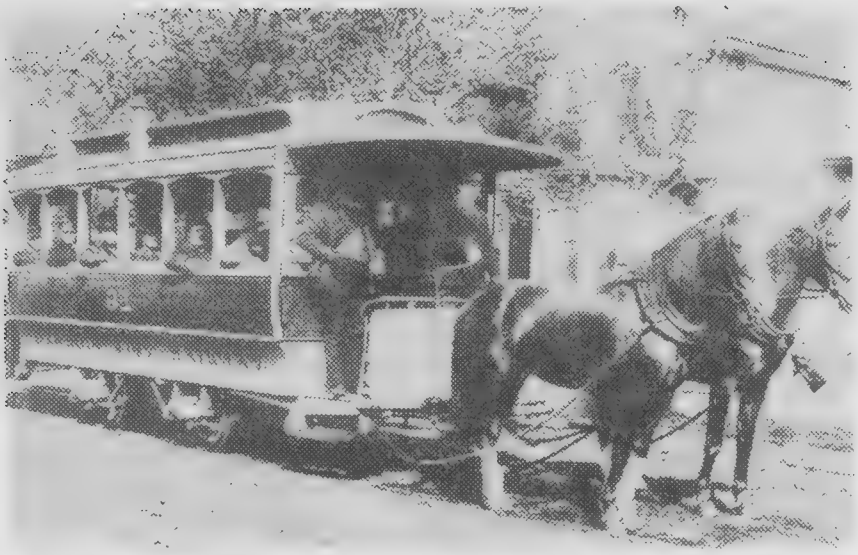
It is true, of course, that the tail of a lynx is only about an inch and a half long, not much to get a hold on, but this only makes the feat that much more praiseworthy. (The bag, of course, must be a stout one, otherwise the animal is more than likely to claw its way out and escape. Whence the origin of the term "the missing lynx").

Early traders and even men of today have remarked on the use of the flesh of the lynx as food, claiming it to be a welcome change from the moose, deer, and the everlasting pemmican. There seems to be no reason why it should not taste good. It makes one's mouth water to think about it.

What did it taste like? I am given to understand that a person, not being aware of what he was eating, would not be able to distinguish it from that of the domestic variety.

There'll be lynx meat in the stew pot tonight—and a welcome change from the everlasting menu of moose, deer and pemmican.

HORSE-CAR DAYS



A fast trip, in the good old days, was provided by this horse-drawn street-car. Note the bell between the team to warn other traffic of the car's speeding approach.

When farmer Roy Lambert, of the Swan River district, plowed up his back forty acres recently he brought up a small bronze bell that must have been in the ground for a long time. This little bell bore the legend in bold lettering—Detroit Street Railway Co.

Acquainting the Detroit company with the fact, they were quite intrigued and wondered what circumstance could have resulted in the bell getting lost 1,500 miles from home, and winding up in Manitoba.

The Detroit street railway began in 1863, and it was then agreed that, no horse was to travel faster than six miles per hour and that all horses would wear bells to warn pedestrians of their approach.

Quite a few bells of different sorts come to light here, generally found along the old discarded trails of the long-ago fur trade, when ox carts travelled to and from the forts and trading posts and where an occasional settler chose to make a home. Probably this bell was brought along by one such and had been used on a cow or horse and lost.

Mentioning this matter to Manitoba's barley king, Mike Lysack, he said that his father had brought to light a bell that now adorned the neck of a cow, and that had a date on it. This was a brass bell and bore the date 1878 and gave also the name and location of the maker. It came from Belgium. Needless to say, these bells, along with others of interest, are being taken care of as of interest locally.

Many old-timers, others not so old either, can remember the horse-drawn street cars, now pretty well given place to motor buses in the changing face of life. Britain has always been a kingdom of short travel, from stage coach on through to heavy oil motor vehicles and now has more buses running on its roads than has the United States and carrying twice as many passengers than its numerous railways. The first coaches were queer affairs, back in 1829, not very comfortable, the seats being hard. Double deckers came early with dangerous steps to the open top where passengers sat back to back.

Rails were laid in many countries in the seventies and eighties and horse-drawn street railways came into being. About 1890, some cities began to have steam take the place of horse-power, and I remember seeing such cars in Birmingham and London. They looked weird at night with fires glowing and sparks flying, and the clatter was fitting to the scene.

Detroit street railway, a picture of which is given, did away with horse-drawn cars entirely in 1895 and turned to electricity.

It was in 1882 that Winnipeg's horse car service was inaugurated. The first car rumbled along the newly-laid rails on Main Street from the City Hall to the Fort Garry Gate.

In an article appearing in the "Manitoba Pageant", W. E. Bradley says that, "a piece of wood lying unnoticed on the track almost brought disaster as the front wheels of the car jumped the rails, and the vehicle slid and swayed to a sudden stop. It was not for long. Willing hands and strong shoulders soon had the car back on the rails."

Travel was much more of a problem in Canada than in many countries on account of the climate. The Winnipeg company started with four cars and four sleighs. The rails for the cars

were laid on closely set flat wooden ties—a safe path for the horses—and the only place on the street that was passable after a rain or during the spring thaws.

"There were no such things as sweepers or rotary plows in the early days. When winter came, rails were abandoned and sleighs took over the job. The car floors were covered inches deep with straw to keep the feet warm and the passengers found a marked degree of comfort in the closed-in vehicles. The driver had no such protection. He was in the open vestibule and exposed to the biting elements."

"Sometimes after the cars were back in the spring, the weather would play tricks. A blizzard would occur and stop the service. Then it would thaw and Main and Portage would be seas of mud. Ox carts and all manner of vehicles would use the only passable road, the only high and dry road—the right-of-way. Pedestrians, too, would use the railway road and the result can be well imagined. Electricity came and gave competition to the horse cars. There were four tracks on Main Street in those days. The horse cars ran on the inner tracks and the electric cars used the outer ones. Competition brought cheaper fares to the joy of passengers. The horse-car passengers overlooked no opportunity to jeer and jibe at the passengers on the electric cars whenever they were stalled. The winter gave them plenty of scope as car axles broke easily in the severe cold. More than one hectic battle was fought."

One advantage to prairie travel was the flatness of the terrain. Over in England I used to look with a certain amount of envy to a lad not much older than myself, who had the glorious job of sitting astride a stout horse at the foot of a hill, awaiting the arrival of a street car. The conductor of the car would hook him on to the side for a lift up the hill. He would be unhooked at the top and would then come down to meet the next one.

On very steep hills it was fairly easy to laugh at a charabanc when passengers had to get out and walk up the hill, while the anxious conductor trailed behind, ready with a wooden chock for the back wheel.

Here is something that to those who know nothing of the horse-and-buggy era will not have had it occur to them. In narrow, congested thoroughfares, with so many horses being driven to and fro, the roads would become very dirty and slippery, even dangerous. Boys, armed with scoops and short-handled brooms would dart in and out of the traffic, sweeping up the droppings and disposing of them through man-holes at the curbs, built for that purpose. These boys had to be pretty lively to escape being run over. That is another occupation that has ceased to be. Just as well perhaps, as it gave little chance for promotion.

NOBLE RED MAN

Big Bear, to all accounts, was a troublesome Cree chief who was likely to put a monkey wrench into the machinery just at the time when everything between the red man and the white was just about settled. Yet he did not want to go too far, and generally agreed to things at the last moment, until the next time. He often said that he did not want a rope around his neck, a custom much in vogue about that time.

So, when on August 23, 1876, the Carlton-Pitt Treaty (No. 6) was signed on the prairies, treaty payments and distribution of provisions completed, Big Bear popped up complaining that he had not heard of the proceedings, though, of course, he knew perfectly well what was taking place.

Rumors from unknown sources were circulated from time to time, that a great confederation of all Indians and Breeds across the western plains was to be formed against the whites. Big Bear was the main suspect. It was said that he had gathered about him a collection of disgruntled savages from various tribes who were hostile to the whites. They were already giving lots of trouble, stealing horses south of the line.

In spite of mutterings and threats from unfriendly chiefs like our Big Bear and Beardy and Piapot, it was not expected that serious trouble was so soon to break out. Warlike displays by mounted warriors from time to time failed to impress the few whites. Had not a mere handful of North West Mounted Police kept more than a semblance of order for over ten years? Many of the red men did not take kindly to the change from freedom to roam at will, to live a life of restriction on the reserve. What were international boundaries, fences, settlements to them? Must he change his way of life completely, the buffalo almost extinct, railways bringing in multitudes of whites in a land that had been theirs from earliest recollection?

While hardly eligible to be styled as "noble red men" (as chiefs like Crowfoot of the Blackfoot and Red Crow of the Bloods were entitled to be so called) leaders like Big Bear of the Plains Crees and Sitting Bull of the Sioux to the south, were proud chiefs that were more sinned against than sinning. The first-named chiefs were intelligent men of great discernment who did not like what was happening to them either, but who realized that to fight against the encroachment of the white man, with his superior arms and power was hopeless and in the long run, bound to fail. To bow to the inevitable was the only wise course to pursue.

With men like Big Bear and Poundmaker, the loss of authority, the constant usurpation of their power was too much for them to take without protest. They were becoming despised

and slighted. No wonder then that they were troublesome and refractory.

A big man before the white man came, Big Bear, being of this dissatisfied nature, and letting the white man know it, drew towards him, not altogether to his liking, much of the riff-raff and scourings of the tribes, men like Wandering Spirit, Lucky Man, Miserable Man and other cut-throats.

It was these men that were responsible for the outrages just before and during the rebellion. These men that perpetrated the Frog Lake massacre, but, being men of Big Bear's band, he was to be blamed. It is known that he could not restrain them and on several occasions he tried in vain.

It was Big Bear that warned Inspector Dickens that the fate of Fort Pitt was sealed and sent word to him to make his way at once to Battleford. In his letter to him he said: "Try and get away before the afternoon, as the young men are all wild and hard to keep in hand."

For the safety of the prisoners from Fort Pitt, taken by the band, the risk reluctantly taken, though safety in doubt at times, the credit must go to Big Bear.

All this is of the past. While not entitled to be called noble, perhaps, Big Bear and Poundmaker, were to many historians' way of thinking, perhaps more noble, certainly more dignified, Poundmaker especially, than was General Middleton, their conqueror, who poured insult upon them.

Sentenced to three years in Stony Mountain for their part in the rebellion, these two chiefs, old and weary, were spared certain indignities such as having their hair cut short, "a humiliation no less mortifying in an Indian's estimation than being scalped. They were released ahead of time for good conduct, but prison walls had left their mark. Their spirits were broken.

Big Bear, a "frustrated" chief of the troubled Indian days in the West, one of those who could not gracefully see the white man take over his domain, and one of those who felt the weight of the white man's justice for his recalcitrant ways.

UPDATING DARWIN

A sad end to a very pleasant summer as far as the animal is concerned. With a full belly and the hope of getting rid of those now useless and heavy horns, it could have looked forward to a quiet winter, but it was not to be.

What is our patriarchal old gunsman thinking about, standing here in pensive mood? Is he sorry for having slain this noble animal and wondering whether it will be charged up against him when he comes to give an account, or is he looking forward to many juicy steaks during the winter? Much more likely that he is wondering how to get the carcass home, having no team of his own. Probably throw it over his shoulder as he is a husky looking fellow.

It goes to show that the theory of survival of the fittest has long ceased to work, if it ever did. According to Darwin the race was to the swift. The fastest animals were able to outrun their pursuers and survive, the slow ones falling victim. This went also for the pursuers, the slow ones being out of luck as far as catching anything was concerned. As this kind of thing was supposed to be going on since the beginning of animal life on this earth, both pursued and pursuer increasing their pace, this moose should have been able to outrun this bullet that brought him crashing to the ground. Not to get too involved, we'll eschew theories and try to figure out how this reputed cautious animal fell victim to something that it must have been aware of many times before, the smell of man and of gunpowder. Surely our hunter does not look the stealthy type that could glide through the woods without making the slightest sound and hide behind the smallest bush.

We knew this man in the years gone by and know that he only hunted for food and not for sport. We knew, too, that he was very successful and always brought home the bacon. What was the secret of success?

I think it must have been because of his whiskers. Animals, some of them, are curious creatures and, even though aware of danger, cannot curb their desire to know just what is what. It is not likely that many hunters carry so much facial adornment around with them and so, taking another look before taking off proved fatal.

Just another theory of course, that holds no more water than the other one, we will

leave our friend to walk over the snow to the bush near by and pick up a few sticks to place on the carcass while he goes to the nearest lumber camp for a team. These sticks will keep away the coyotes and other animals for a while as they will suspect a trap.

THE THRESHING REVOLUTION

If someone had told this proud gathering that before long a farmer and his son, or even his daughter, would be able to do all that they were doing, in less time and much less effort; that they should put the pitch forks and grain bags and machinery in a museum, along with a stuffed horse, they would have laughed, and got on with the business of threshing.

This picture was taken around 1899 and the outfit was brought from Ontario and not so well suited for the west. The straw carrier was fine for threshing on a barn floor when the barn yard was ten feet below. Moreover the grain could be dropped down a hole in the floor to a bin beneath. Out west, threshing in the field it was quite a chore to keep the straw away from the machine, and kept three or four men busy.

Grain was at first caught in half bushel measures underneath the machine and later improvements saw the grain come down a spout at the side of the separator, to be caught in bags. Bags were then tied and lifted into the wagon box. Sheaves could only be fed on one side.

A year or two later, a self-feeder was introduced, doing away with the band cutter who was a constant source of worry to the feeder who constantly reminded the boy to take only one slash at the band and avoid taking a finger off him.

Another improvement was the grain elevator that enabled the threshed grain to slide down a long spout and be bagged into the wagon. This spout was long enough to be out of the way of a team and rack that now could feed sheaves from this side of the machine also.

It was some time before grain was handled loose, much to the joy of the farmer who had previously been obliged to tie bags in below zero weather. Feeding from both sides of the separator saw stacks built in two rows, with the machine between them. Too many stacks together proved to be poor policy as occasionally a spark from the engine or a hot wad from the separator, caused by friction, would set the straw ablaze and a move had to be made in a hurry to save both the outfit and the rest of the grain.

It was no fun at all for the women folk to feed all these men, or if it was, the glamour soon wore off, especially if it rained or snowed for a week or two. Also feeding all the horses in unfavourable weather could soon make the thresh bill greater than the crop return. Mostly the gang would be made up of neighbours who would take themselves and their horses home until conditions were more favorable, but there were many members from a distance and some whose love for home and mother was not strong enough to tear themselves away from a good boarding place, especially if the farmer had some lovely daughters waiting on the table. Vari-

ous methods had to be used to arouse a feeling of nostalgia among such as these and I could mention a few.

If on looking at this picture of a threshing gang you think this is a crowd, it is nothing to what could be seen in places over in Europe. During the first world war I saw a threshing outfit at work. No straw carrier was used as the straw was not broken up. It was wanted for many uses, one being to stuff horse collars with. This straw was caught at the end of the separator by men carrying sling ropes. When one had a bundle of it he would proceed with it up a ladder to waiting men, and another would take his place. A boy was seated near the band-cutter whose job it was to grab the twine band before it went into the machine.

There would be 7 or 8 bags hung on to different spouts, each catching a different kind of seed. The threshed grain would be almost ready for the mill. These were not the two-bushel bags in use with us here but four-bushel ones and required some handling.

With the advent of the binder, the farmer that took the knotter off his binder and allowed the grain to slide out loose on to the stubble was looked upon by other farmers as a bold adventurer, as indeed he was.

It is hard to see what further improvements can be made for the purpose of harvesting, but not so long ago the binder was considered the very last word as it performed its almost human mission. But wonders never cease. As less and less men are required for the world's work, it poses a problem that will have to be solved somehow.

THE STEAM TRACTOR WAS A MENACE

It grieves me to say it and it will cause many to lift their eyebrows in astonishment, but the fact is I do not and never have liked the old steamers. I know that recently there have been two large gatherings of farmers, old and young, one meeting taking place in Saskatchewan and another at Austin, Manitoba, at which old threshermen went around half dizzy looking at and messing with, old steam tractors, but I was not one of them. I would not cross the street to look at a steam tractor.

I will go further. If I had an old steam engine setting in the fence corner and I also had a bulldozer, I would take the bulldozer and dig a hole with it deep enough to bury the steamer. I would then push the tractor into the hole and cover it up, all except the smoke stack. I would leave that sticking up so that these lovers of the old steam engine could put flowers in it if they wished to.

I took a dislike to these things from the very first, ever since I was pushed into the fire-box of one in order to replace a plug that had melted out. I was the smallest fellow on the outfit. My ambition as a lad was to be a jockey, but I wasn't big enough. They had so much trouble pushing me in that I was scared that they would never fish me out again. It was hot in there too as the fire had only shortly been removed. They did get me out, however, and gave

me fifteen cents. I vowed I wouldn't do it again, not for less than seventy-five cents.

Every time I would come in from the field with a load of sheaves the safety valve would hold its pressure until I came along with my horses and then would let out a mighty pent-up blast that would send my team off on a run and make them hard to hold with my ninety pounds of humanity at one end of the lines.

Later on, working on an outfit to pick up a few dollars, I would find that both the separator and the engine would be stuck in the mud half the time and that we did not get paid for working half the night getting them out. A smaller outfit, portable engine, would have been much more serviceable.

Did anybody ever hear of a thresherman owning a steam outfit making any money? They would go in the hole threshing and then have to take the engine to the bush sawing logs in order to try and make up, and generally end up being worse off than they were before. If any old-timer ever made any money with such an outfit, he should be in the museum along with his engine for he would be such a rarity. More often than not, the owner lost his farm.

Nor did the farmer hiring him make any money. He was always glad to see him come into the yard, but much more so to see him get out. Not only did he lose half his stock of winter wood to keep the fire up in normal years, and all of it in wet seasons, but, if he wasn't around, a lot of his wheat and oat sheaves would go into the fire-box too, especially in the early frosty mornings just as the sun came up.

If the runners of the granary reached out more than an inch or two, the engineer would never fail to smash them off as he "got set" in one minute and twenty seconds. If he took another ten seconds to get set he would be able to look back and see where he was going.

When I brought in my first crop and neatly stacked it in four stacks, a spark from the engine set fire to the lot just after we had got nicely started and my entire year's work, laboriously and painfully carried out with oxen, went up in smoke. The thresherman said that I should have put the stacks in pairs only. Quite so, and also the smoke stack should have had a screen in place to prevent such a calamity.

How many culverts did those juggernauts smash up in the early days? It will never be known. The bureau of statistics never tried to find out, not having the staff of present proportions.

I took this picture of a homesteader many years ago. I did not ask him what he was shooting at. I can only surmise but I know that he was being bothered by a machine agent trying to sell him a threshing machine. He can probably see him coming again and he wants to get on with his plowing. A few shots over his head will likely drive him away, but it is a risky thing to do. He might just happen to shoot too low and kill the fellow. That would be a very bad thing indeed and although he could convince the jury (hard to do) that it was an accident, he would still likely get five years for it. After all, those machine agents that went around selling steam threshing outfits to farmers in the early days were human beings and could not be shot like, say, a coyote or moose.

Well, they have had their day and have gone out of use now. If anybody wants to go and look at what is left of them in the museums, it is all right with me. A museum is the place for them. They can't do any more harm and cause any more suffering and pain or cause women to leave their husbands. May this be said of them: they were weighed in the balance, and they weighed too much.

STERN-WHEELER ON THE PRAIRIES

Digging under the bank of the river, about two feet down, at Prince Albert last summer, I was able to secure a double handful of square, hand wrought nails and spikes, a ¾-inch bolt about 18 inches long, and a piece of oak. After over eighty years of lying in the ground this timber was very solid and took a deal of chopping.

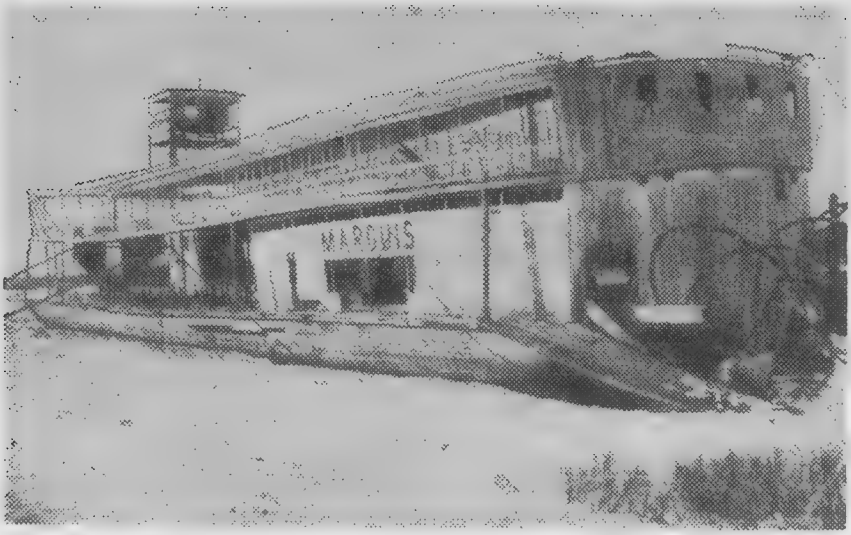
All these relics, secured for my collection, came from the old stern-wheeler "Marquis" built for the Hudson's Bay Co. for service on the Saskatchewan, and was the largest of three, the others being the "Manitoba" and the "North-West".

The "Marquis" was a beautiful vessel, upper works of white pine, and the interior lavishly furnished with rich carpets, piano, mirrors, silverware, etc.

During the rebellion of '85 it operated on both branches of the Saskatchewan river and rendered yeoman service transporting troops and supplies for General Middleton's army.

At the close of the campaign it left Fort Pitt for Grand Rapids on July 4th, 1885, having on board the luckless prisoners held captive for so long by Big Bear and conveyed them to Prince Albert. It had on board also the 90th Battalion Winnipeg Rifles, (Little Black Devils), 232 officers and men of the 10th Royal Grenadiers of Toronto, and 190 officers and men of the 92nd Winnipeg Light Infantry. Arrived Prince Albert at 8:30 a.m. on July 8th.

These steam boats continued in service for a year or two after the rebellion but with low waters rendering navigation difficult, and with the advent of the railway reducing their use-



Probably few Canadians are aware that the present Prime Minister's home town was once served by steam-boat, but here is photographic evidence—the hulk of the steamer "Marquis" beached at Prince Albert.

fulness, they passed out of commission, the "Marquis" being the last to quit.

It was finally beached at Prince Albert and allowed to spoil and be dispoiled, fire finishing it off.

Looking back, one cannot help but think how wonderful it would have been, if instead of abandoning the costly vessel, it could have been brought a little away from the river and covered in. What a unique place to have housed the many exhibits now having to make shift in the city hall for want of a museum. It would have gone well with the city's famous wild-life exhibit on River Street, one of the finest in Canada.

BEARS—TAME OR OTHERWISE

In and around the gay nineties (not so gay for most folk) the standard of living in Britain was much higher than in some of the Continental countries. Hence it became the Mecca for many Germans, Swiss and Italians who hoped to improve their lot in life, even a little.

On the streets of the big cities would be seen German bands, hand organs, barrel organs with a monkey sitting on it, Italian venders of plaster images, and swarthy Italians in charge of a dancing bear. Street singers, these of course a home product, would be seen and heard slowly walking the back streets, asking in plaintive tones if anyone could tell them where their wandering boy was that night, and would there be room for Nelly there? We always hoped that there would be room for Nelly.

These dancing bears were a dirty brown color and big fellows, too, as I remember. They were muzzled and led by a chain attached to a ring in the nose. We youngsters would tag along from one pitch to the next, and the bolder ones would try to touch the bear on the back. It seems a wonder to me now that a bear never got cross enough to turn and grab one of us but I never heard of it happening. One day though, a grinder's monkey came for me savagely and would have bit me but for the chain.

Arriving at a suitable pitch, the bear trainer would unsnap the chain, order the bear on to its hind legs, and round and around they would go, the man drawling out some kind of a song. He always carried a stout pole about 8 feet long, and he would throw this to the bear and the animal would then throw it back to him. At the end of the performance he would secure the bear to the chain and come round with the hat. The crowd would remember important engagements and hasten away.

Curious to know where and how the man and the bear would pass the night, I resolved to follow them at the close of one day. On his way home the man stopped at a public house and, opening the door, called for two glasses of beer. When they arrived he drank one of them and handed the other to the bear, and the animal knew exactly what to do with it. Resuming his journey he arrived at a row of houses in the slum area and he and the bear went into one of them.

I presume that the organ grinders and their monkeys would do the same. Hard to believe that in my lifetime such things were commonplace.

Now I do not know whether our bears would be amenable to such training and provide a means of combating the cost price squeeze. More likely to add a little more squeeze. But I have always had a liking for the bear and have long ago forgiven the one that ran away with my first calf.

It is astonishing that we have so many around after all these years when we consider that every man's hand is against them and if one shows himself, the rifle is reached for. The least desire a bear has is to have any dealings with a man and he will make himself scarce immediately whenever he gets the whiff of one. Like every other living thing, however, and this includes man, his one aim in life is to eat, and when nature fails to provide him with food in sufficient quantity he must look elsewhere. It is under these circumstances that bears run into trouble.

This last fall was a bad one for bears. Berries were scarce and the fish, owing to shallow water, did not come far up from the lakes. In conditions like these, a few tame bee hives come like manna from heaven to a hungry bear and a young pig, floor price notwithstanding, is about as good a proposition as Ursus Americanus could wish for.

Two of our neighbours have suffered losses in these departments but we have been more fortunate. Although a big fellow operated last summer within 300 yards of our pig yard and spent lots of time pulling down choke cherry trees, he did not bother the porkers. Had he done so, well, you can see by the picture what one of our neighbours did to him. Seems as if he has had lots of pork in his day as he looks like a pig himself.

Not all the old-timers went out to shoot the bear, like this one. Many more were captured and domesticated for the street entertainments of Europe. Dancing bears were of particular interest in Britain where they were brought by immigrant Germans, Italians and Swiss.

WHEN THE WHISTLE BLEW

It was a never-to-be-forgotten day in the west when the whistle blew, announcing the arrival of the first passenger train to a new-born town. It meant that tortuous journeyings over rough roads were over and touch with the great outer world was renewed. What other sound on earth could be compared to the sweet music of that first train whistle?

Just to interject a little relevant information here, may I be allowed to add that it was in the town of my birth that the sound of a train whistle was heard for the first time, to be echoed around the world.

On the earliest English trains, a horn was blown by the driver, and it was in 1833, on the

The haunting whistle and billowing smoke of the oldtime locomotive will soon be heard no more. The engines that did more than their share to open up the west are rapidly being replaced by the modern diesel . . . efficient, but perhaps not so romantic.

little railway running between Leicester and Burton that the first locomotive whistle was used.

A train having run down a market cart which had strayed on the track caused Stevenson to consult an organ builder at Leicester, who took an organ pipe and made out of it a steam trumpet to be worked from the boiler. When it was tested, there was heard for the first time, the sound which is now among the most familiar and the most thrilling in the world—the sound of a train whistle.

It was on October the tenth, 1899 that the train shown in the picture arrived at Swan River, Manitoba. On board was D. H. Hanna, president of the Canadian Northern, also Theo Burrows, Esq., M.P. for Dauphin, and a coach full of new settlers.

Alighting from the train, all joined in singing the National Anthem, "God Save the Queen" (for Queen Victoria, of blessed memory, was still alive).

Was the train on time? As a matter of fact it was just twenty years late. The Dominion Government, during the regime of the Liberal party, in projecting its transcontinental line, chose the northern route which would have come through the valley. The survey was completed and a telegraph line erected. Then came the defeat of the McKenzie administration.

A member of a vanishing race, the old wooden coaches of the first passenger cars were real events, and, be it day or night, the entire population always turned out to greet each arrival.

The change in the government resulted in a change in the survey, and the main line of the Canadian Pacific was built 150 miles to the south.

One day a week, even if it came at midnight, as it generally did, the coming in of the train was a great event and everybody turned out to see it. Came to see who was getting off and who was getting on. (Who is the fellow with the whiskers that is getting off? The fellow with the very loud check suit? Must be, according to the bills posted around town the world-renowned tight-rope walker that has performed before all the crowned heads of Europe and who defies anyone to be able to pull him off the rope. Well, we shall see about that).

Not until all the freight is safe in the shed and everybody has been given a good looking over, and the train has pulled out for the next stop do the people go home and to bed.

The familiar whistle, more of a toot than a whistle, compared to European locomotives, will soon be heard no more on the prairies, and the big cloud of heavy smoke will not be seen, for the world moves along and changes are made. The diesel engine is taking over.

DOUKHOBORS SIXTY YEARS IN MANITOBA

It is 60 years this summer since 1,500 Doukhobors from the bleak land of Siberia trekked the 30 miles from the end of the steel and rested their weary limbs at "Tent Town". It gave colour to the pioneer settlement. The men, with their lemonade pants, too short by a foot and their black coats, too long by another foot, topped off by a pork-pie hat, was a cause for quiet laughter. The women, dressed in voluminous bright coloured skirts, were about as wide as long.

The chuckles were not all on one side. When the men from old Ontario and western Europe dressed up for Sunday in their Christie stiffs and exposed their heavy watch chains and peered over their paper collars, while the women filled their bishop and leg-o-mutton sleeves it was about fifty-fifty. Less than that I think for the babouska of the Russian ladies was a mile ahead of the fruit baskets and hens-nests that our women balanced precariously on their heads.

Not a word of English could these Doukhobors speak and what a time they had for a while trying to make themselves understood. Jack McKay, whose father had the first store in "Tent Town", tells of one fellow wanting some eggs. Not making himself understood, he finally put his hat down and sat on it.

In between my homestead duties, I found work in a store and it was always exciting when the Douks came into town to shop. This, of course, was after they had reached the land allotted to them. They were located forty miles from Swan River, and they built themselves stabling and huts near the town so as to have accommodation when coming to shop. There would generally be about 25 or 30 of them doing the shopping.

Everything was new to them or at least some things were, and when one of them espied something on the shelf that seemed to have great possibilities in the way of cooking, he bought one and so did everyone else. They walked up Main Street swinging them by the handle. They were those intimate articles that we generally find under the bed.

In my youth the Doukhobors used to come into town en masse to shop. When something caught their fancy they would sometimes empty the shelves of the item.

The costumes of the early Doukhobors were sometimes a cause for entertainment, but the chuckles were not all on one side. The other women in hats like hen's nests and fruit baskets were just as funny to the Douk's.

After a while they acquired a smattering of English and we in turn picked up a little of their lingo. One day I was puzzled when a fellow wanted fifteen yards of something blue. I learned that much but could not get any further. So, he called over one of the ladies and showed me what he required. It was garter elastic.

They were full of fun and seemed very happy when they first came out. Hard-working and honest. I asked one fellow to tell me how to say something more to customers than just "good morning", something in the way of a friendly greeting. He told me. It did not seem to have the desired effect. The reason I learned later. He had taught me to say, "Hello monkey-face".

We are hearing these days of many of them wishing to return to Russia. It will not be returning as those that came here sixty years ago will be few and far between and any that are left will not wish to leave here. It will be mostly Canadian-born descendants who know nothing of Russia or of conditions there. Called the "Sons of Freedom" they are a minority group and may find that there will be little freedom of religion for them, religion of any kind not being a strong point over in Russia just now.

As Swan River Valley is celebrating its diamond jubilee this summer (1958), how nice it would be if some of these Doukhobors that came here in 1898 could come again for a visit. After all, it was not us that caused them to leave here. It was the then Saskatchewan government, who in 1907 insisted on their performing homestead duties.

Here is a fine point. If some of them go back to Russia and do not like it there, has British Columbia seen the last of them? Having been born in Canada can they be refused re-admittance?

MOOSE HUNT . . .

Our Canadian moose would never win a prize for looks in an animal beauty show, and why people have the homely old mug mounted and hung up to stare them in the face is beyond me. At the same time the moose is a stately animal taken as a whole and its movements are majestic. To see one on the move, picking up his feet with head high, and with lots of bounce is a pleasing sight.

In early settlement days moose were plentiful here and were fairly tame. I have watched them browsing within easy shooting distance without taking alarm. Having long legs and short necks they cannot reach down to grass like buffalo so live on bushes.

As a result of their tameness at the time, they were decimated by trigger-happy settlers with the result that they ceased to be around here. One fellow used to brag that he bagged 47 of them one winter, selling the carcass for a few dollars. Another fellow shot four in the summer time as they stood by the roadside, all with young.

I must confess to having shot one of these noble beasts or perhaps I should say, contributing to its death. An autopsy perhaps would have shown that it died of old age together with a broken heart.

I was never a hunter for two reasons. I could not hit the side of a barn unless the door

was shut and besides I had no liking for the sport. Moose are God's own horses and a live one looks better than a dead one.

On this particular occasion I was coming out of the bush with my oxen pulling a load of wood when I noticed this moose standing quite close to the trail. It had a tired, wistful, far-away look, remindful of a weary politician waiting at the door of the Senate. It took very little notice of me.

I had a rifle at home, bought at the time when a bear ran away with one of my calves, so after having my dinner I walked back to see if the moose was still there. It had moved a little further into the trees and the primeval urge to kill that is inherent in all of us, placed there when it was necessary to kill to survive, came over me and I took aim and fired. I did this a good many times, but nothing happened. The moose did not even move.

The Winchester arms people have a reputation for making good arms but all manufacturers turn out a dud sometimes, whether cars, rifles or combines. I had chanced to be the one to buy a lemon.

At about the thirteenth shot, unlucky for the moose, I must have slipped in the soft snow because I hit the thing and it went down. As I reached the prostrate form it gave me a look like the one Caesar gave Brutus, and gave up the ghost. There it lay and you never saw a deader moose.

I went home and laid the deadly rifle down and took up the camera. I would take a picture of my quarry for all to see. It was a tripod affair with a long tube so that I could be in the photograph too.

Setting up the camera I went to raise up the head of the moose a little but as soon as I touched it, it jumped to its feet and I lit out for home and mother.

As I said, it either died of old age or shock because I found on examination that I had hit it in the leg and that would not be sufficient to cause its demise. It was full of ticks and thin and I had no moose meat to give to my friends.

I am convinced that it had come to the end of the road, as all creatures must and it makes one think of what must happen to these animals when they can no longer forage for a living. My opinion is that they go off and die without much ado, as a dog or a horse will do when the time comes.

While it wouldn't win a beauty prize, the moose is nevertheless a stately animal with plenty of bounce in its step. Here is a photo of what has been named Anderson's Moose, in harness to a sulky.

LIVING ALONE IN THE WOODS

What do you suppose the owner of this log shanty is telling his visitor? Probably the conversation is of the bear skin stretched out to dry and of the big one that got away.

Living alone in the bush did not bother this fellow, but many such that I knew of could

Living alone in the woods takes a special kind of temperament, especially when the long, dark and cold winter sets in. These two old-timers no doubt had plenty to talk about when they got together, but we can bet that the bearskin made a good conversational piece.

not stand the solitary life and became "bushed". Even though small settlements were not too far away and neighbors were close enough to visit at times, the winter nights got them down, and they would begin talking to themselves, having no one else to talk to. When they started answering themselves back, the situation got out of hand.

A settler only a mile from me told me in confidence one day that King Solomon's Mines were situated on his place. I told him that he was lucky to have them and that I wished I had one on my homestead to keep my potatoes and other things in.

This fellow had no living thing on his place, not even a dog, and he got to the point where he did not want anybody to go over there. He quit working in the day time and would come out only at night and chop away at the trees. He had about 40 acres of poplar slashed down, impossible to walk across. Some nights he would howl like a wolf, putting the wind up those of us in range.

Another chap, an Englishman, entirely out of place here, did not homestead, but would eke out a living doing odd jobs such as bucking wood or painting. He always, winter or summer, wore a black tail coat that must have been made of good stuff for it never seemed to wear out. It was amusing to see him bucking wood in a tail coat.

He did not wear a top hat on these jobs, but one day he started up the railway track towards Fort Pelly, Saskatchewan, from Durban, Manitoba, a matter of 30 miles or so. It was a bitter cold day, well below zero, so to keep the cold wind off him he bought a false face at the drug store.

He had a very springy way of walking, and bouncing along the track wearing this mask, and in his tail coat, he scared the daylight out of a fellow named Sam McGurr, who happened to be crossing the track with his team of horses and sleigh. The horses bolted. Sam swore that he had seen a gorilla and would not be denied that he had.

This fellow used to visit me a lot and much too often. So one dark night I took him on a meandering walk through the bush over to this other fellow and waiting a long time until this homesteader would open the door, I nudged old Bob in and blew my lantern out. I learned later that they got along fine together. Anyhow, both of them had eventually to be taken away to be cared for. They would probably get all right again, as most of them do, but I did not see either of them again.

Walking home from town one winter's day, a fellow I knew slightly drove past me, urging on a pair of thin, aging horses and not getting much speed out of them. He was heading for town and had about a mile to go. Ten minutes after, along comes a chap that I was better acquainted with, walking fast and carrying a rifle at the ready. He had a wild gleam in his eye.

I asked him what he was doing with a rifle and he said that he was going to shoot "so and so", the man that I had passed with the team.

I told him that he would get into serious trouble doing so, it being out of season and he having no license, but he said he was going to drill a hole right through him.

"What has this fellow done to you to make you wish to shoot him?" I asked. "Has he been making love to your wife?"

But it was worse than that. I was astounded to hear that this fellow had picked up some logs that my informant had cut and had taken them to the mill as his own.

"Well," I said. "Don't let me detain you. You should be able to catch up with the scoundrel before he leaves town."

But he never did. The guilty man, an American, evidently never once stopped until he reached the deep south because I did not hear of any shooting.

EARLY DAYS AT SWAN RIVER

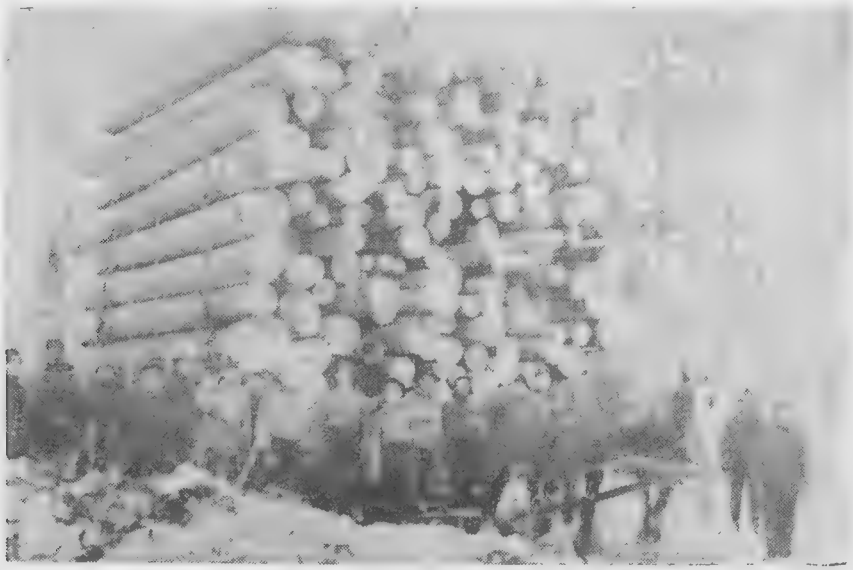
At the time this valley of the Swan River was opened up for permanent settlement it was heavily wooded, and anyone wishing to find a piece of open land for cropping, had to go quite a few miles west, to near the Saskatchewan border.

In order to earn a few dollars for absolute necessities such as tobacco or snuff, one had to sell wood in the towns or go to work in the lumber mills of which there were many, both large and small. The pay was from $15 and board up, according to experience and ability. Those settlers fortunate enough to own a team of horses or oxen would haul wood to town. This was indeed carrying coals to Newcastle as nearly all the storekeepers and business men either had taken up homesteads or had bought cheap land for speculation. Everybody had lots of wood.

This depressed the price. Just as today we have a surplus of wheat, our markets being limited and also surplus of poetry and short, short stories on account of advertisements in the papers telling everybody that they can work with a little tuition, so there was in the early days a surplus of dry wood. Wheat, of course, will keep for a long time, poetry not so long, as most of it smells from the very start, but wood at that time was the only thing to sell and had to be "fire-saled" no matter what the price. Just as in the 1930's the only time we made any money was when the binder broke down. At the beginning of the century we could have made more money staying at home, but we had to go to give the oxen exercise to prevent their toenails growing too long.

One dollar and a half was the floor price for a load of dry wood delivered under the clothes line in the back yard. Cord wood cut green was seventy-five cents left in the bush, or one dollar and twenty-five in town, stacked and piled. Four-foot cord wood that is. It generally had to be stacked twice as it invariably fell over when the snow began to melt, and this condition was so stated in the small print of the contract. I have been out as long as twelve hours delivering a cord of green wood after many upsets.

Competition was keen. The supply exceeded the demand which kept the price from getting off the floor, and when I once asked the Methodist minister for $1.75 a cord he refused to pay it and who could blame him! Considerably hurt, I took it over to the Anglican minister and gave it to him for nothing and went home.



I had stated that this was the kind of load these fellows had been accustomed to put on at the mill. The editor however left that out and a reader thought I was a bit of a fibber to say that I could sell that for 75c.

Though this kindly deed would mean a new star in my crown, it did not help the immediate situation.

Just as it might become necessary in order to sell wheat and maintain the price to increase the number of pounds to the bushel we were forced to increase the size of our loads in order to obtain the one dollar and a half. As the loads got bigger and bigger, I soon found out that I could not keep up the pace. I could not chop down a load and make the trip to town all in one day. I was thus forced out of the market.

Harking back to the Methodist minister and the Anglican curate, as it was so long ago it may have been the other way around, but I should really have taken it to the Presbyterian manse and given it to the poor old minister who had so many children and was often seen on a Sunday morning just before church time bucking wood in order to heat the two-storey ice-box he lived in, the only kind they seemingly knew how to build in those days. The reason I did not do so was because he was not on my road home.

It was at this point that I announced that henceforth I would deliver no more wood in town but would stay home and cut a load for seventy-five cents and help load to anyone that cared to come to the bush and get it. Two young fellows with sturdy teams took me up on it.

You would never believe it, unless you saw it with your very own eyes what amount of wood a man can take from the bush when he does have to cut it himself or do all his own loading. When I thought that I had cut enough to load up the two of them, the first one to arrive would take the lot and look around for more. I soon became aware that I could not keep both of them going, not with a single bitted axe.

If I was to say that after piling on all they possibly could they would pull over to the nearest tree in order to get on to the top of the load by climbing said tree and then ask me to hand up the lines to them. You perhaps would not believe me so I will not say it, anyhow they had no difficulty with hydro or telephone wires as there were none at that time.

Moose and deer began to move off my place looking for shelter from winter's icy blast.

One of the men whose name I cannot recall went south in the spring and did well as a house-mover. The other one went north and worked with his team for a big lumber company.

THE GREENHORN

My friend and I left England for Canada at the beginning of this century in response to an urgent request of the Canadian Government for men of resource, ambition, ability and desire for an agricultural life, to help fill the vast open spaces of the Dominion.

My chum knew absolutely nothing of farming, and I knew very little more. I had learned however that bulls had horns and that white Buff-Orpingtons were a breed of fowl. But we could learn.

Reaching Toronto we had a little falling out and parted forever. He walked up King Street and I walked up Yonge Street, but meeting at the top and feeling lonesome we held a summit conference, and the cold war came to an end.

Dropping off at a place about 100 miles west of Toronto, a small habitation that looked as if it could use a couple of fellows like us, we immediately got in touch with several farmers with a view to getting a job. My pal, who was bigger, huskier looking, and had a way with him soon got picked up at ten dollars a month and board, but I was not so fortunate and had to wait a day or so.

Finally a man said that he would take me on trial and give me what I was worth. He kept his word. He did even more, and after a week or two, said that he would give me five dollars a month.

The farmers around there were well fixed in every way, and the houses and barns were substantial edifices of brick and stone. Arriving at the place, the women of the house took to me immediately, regarding me (dressed in leggings and high collar, and having blue eyes and neatly parted hair) as the cutest thing that had ever come into their lives. The farmer, and to a lesser degree his two sons, did not share their enthusiasm, and wondered whether his judgment had been faulty in picking me up.

History books are not too reliable, and when one reads that slavery in the British Empire came to an end in 1811, it is evident that the compilers knew nothing of Ontario because I was called to duty at 4 o'clock every morning and worked as long as it was possible to see. Boots worn at that time were pull-ons. To take off you simply put your heel in a boot-jack and pulled your leg out. Had it been necessary to tie and untie laces, I would not have troubled to take them off.

Now I was as anxious to drive a team of horses as the boss was to make sure that I didn't. I felt that I would never be a farmer unless I learned to drive, so I used the women-folk as a pressure group to work on the farmer, to give me the opportunity.

It came one day when the boss allowed me to go and mark out a field that was to be planted to corn. I was to mark it both ways like a crossword puzzle, and the man and his two

After a full week of dawn-to-dusk chores, Sunday was a day of rest and proper social conduct for everyone. The family farm of yesterday was a real institution to be fondly remembered.

sons were to come with corn-planters, (called dibbles) and pop the seeds into the squares thus formed.

When they arrived to commence work they gazed on the field with dismay. The boss said that it would have to be marked afresh as I had made the lines so crooked. The boss asked me if I had used a cow as a guide post. One boy said that it would be better to leave it the way I had done it as the crows would not be able to find the corn and the other boy said that they would break their necks in the attempt and thus rid the field of many pests.

Another revelation came when it rained heavily one day. The farmer insisted on me going to church with him every Sunday, though I sometimes felt, after a hard week, that, along with his two sons, the orchard was a good place to meditate in.

He had said that, when the Lord sent rain, it meant that man and beast should rest from their labors. When the test came and the rain poured down, we all made for the house but I was to learn that the divine dispensation was not for me. I was given a small hook that fitted over the hand, and introduced to a load of corn that required husking, put there for just such an occasion.

Will I ever forget that first sleigh ride? When the snow came, the women insisted that I be given a sleigh ride. The farmer agreed at once. He instructed the eldest lad to hitch on to the stone boat and take the fanning mill up to the other farm and clean oats. I could go along with him.

Dashing along at three miles an hour on a stone boat with the frosty air filling your nostrils is exhilarating in the extreme and worth coming a long way to experience. Lots of fun in the early days.

ROARING RIVERS

Homesteading in Swan River was easier in one respect than in homesteading on the prairies.

Shut in as the valley was by the shelter of the Duck Mountains on the south and the Porcupine on the north and Thunder Hill on the west, it was comparatively free from blizzards. Moreover, the bluffy nature of the country gave winds a poor chance to get a clean sweep. Impossible storms were seldom if ever known in early days at least, but there was another difficulty and menace. The valley was transectioned by seven rivers and streams, all of which required fording, four or five of them sometimes on a single trip.

Some of the smaller streams were the most dangerous during run-off as there were cut outs and sheer drops. Such a one was the Minitonas Creek that claimed the life of a young girl, the only girl of a large family of boys, when in sight of her future home that she was never to reach. She and her mother were swept out of the wagon box. The mother was saved

but the girl's body was caught in bushes on the bottom of the creek. It was always necessary to fasten the box by chains to the running gear so as to prevent it floating off, but as the top snow had not all melted it was deceptive and the precaution was not taken in this instance. Many other tragedies could be recorded. These creeks, amounting to very little during the summer, roared down the hills at terrific speed in the spring.

Here is the experience of the first minister to come to the valley, on the arrival of the permanent settlers, the late Rev. Eben Johnson, as told by him to a recorder:

"When the winter was melting into spring, Eben started out for the Thunder Hill early in April (from Tent Town) to conduct service. His pony having died from a chill caused on another trip, he was mounted on a bigger animal, hired from the livery. Minitonas Creek and the Roaring River were safely crossed on the ice. When about a mile from the Swan River, he heard the waters roar and knew that the ice had broken.

"The winter ford was not a crossing at any time except in the driest season. To go back round by a summer ford would entail a distance of twelve miles at least, so Eben decided to go forward and see what it looked like.

"The river was flowing more than bank full with intermittent floes of ice coming down. At one place, from last summer's experience, there was known to be a gravel beach which led gradually into deeper water. The gravel was hidden by the spring flood and Eben thought he would venture in and see how deep it would be.

"The horse in his first plunge was into water over his back, and consequently up to the top of Eben's trousers. The horse came up and bravely began to swim, but unfortunately down stream instead of across. There was a perpendicular bank on the opposite side of the stream with only one place of exit for a ford in dry times. Toward this cut Eben was anxious to steer his course and so, ignorantly pulled the bridle rein to steer his horse to it.

"Now, Eben did not know that one thing that must not be done to a swimming horse is touch his bit. It upsets him in the water. He must be guided by moving the hand and slapping him on the side of the head. So Eben upset the horse and he was on the point of coming over on top of Eben. Thinking that it would be better to be alone in the water than with a horse on top of him, Eben let go of the bridle rein, saddle, horse and everything, and floated off behind.

"His overcoat opened up like an umbrella and supported him for a moment, and in the same instant the horse had righted himself, and getting turned around in the upset, started upstream with his tail floating behind. Eben had just time to grip the tip of the tail and away they went upstream, creating a picture which might well have been taken for a great sea-serpent with a horse's head and a human body. As they neared the farther bank Eben saw that they would strike the bank too far down for the one exit, but hoped the horse would swim up to it. To his astonished delight, the horse climbed up on something and stood in about three feet of water against the bank.

"Eben climbed up beside him and found it was a shelf of hard pan that jutted out far enough from the bank to make room for a path along the water. Eben led the horse along

Many a western creek, or river, which might be dry in the summer could be dangerous, turbulent waters during the spring run-off. Such streams, when in flood, were often the scene of disaster and loss of stock and life to early settlers.

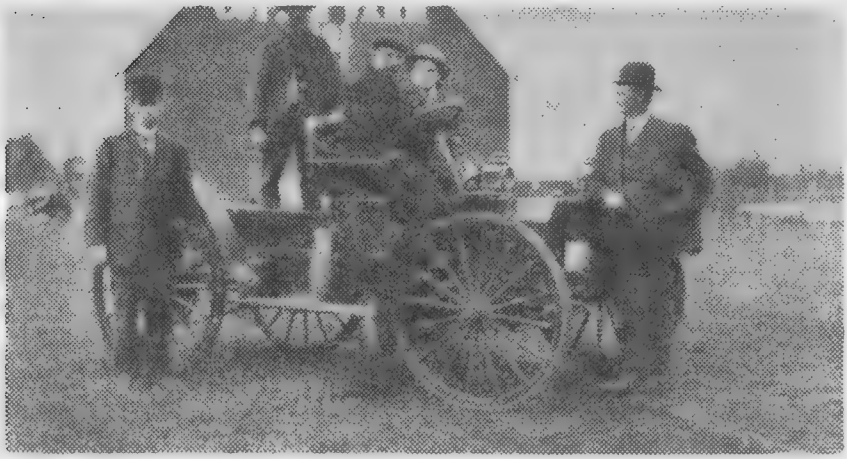
this, about 20 feet, to the cut and got out on the side of the river he desired, but he still had 12 miles to go to his appointment.

"Mounting the horse he made him run for about two miles until he was sure the horse was well warmed up for horses often died from being in icy water, then went into the scrub along the trail and took off all his clothing and wrung his underwear as dry as possible, again dressed himself, and away off for his ten-mile ride. The wind he was facing and the motion of the horse seemed to warm and dry his clothing until he felt quite comfortable, and made himself believe he was getting dry.

"He began his service without mentioning any of his episode in the river and no one was more surprised than he when he saw a little pool of water gathering at each foot. Not perturbed, however, he continued his service and nothing was said by anyone until the benediction was pronounced, and old Mr. Lyons came forward and said: 'Are you wet, man? Are you wet? Mother, get the man some dry clothes.' Then the preacher told the settlers, gathered in the house of Mr. Lyons for service, what had happened to him."

What a man: nothing ever stopped him.

HORSELESS CARRIAGES



When word got around that the preacher was to arrive in a spanking new horseless carriage, church attendance was bound to increase. However, this sudden interest in religious fervor could have been influenced by a curiosity about the mechanical buggy.

What, no horses? No team to unhitch, feed and water? The implement dealer has brought the preacher along in his International buggy to conduct service on the farm of A. J. Cotton. When this event becomes known it should perhaps increase attendance to church services by some who will be more interested in examining this chain-driven contraption than in more important contemplation.

It was in the '90's that I saw for the first time a horseless carriage in London. It was a kind of dray and a man walked in front of it carrying a red flag. The speed limit at that time was three miles an hour and it was some years before this speed was increased and other restrictions lifted.

It was never expected that the horse would be so completely sidetracked, and the early cars were looked upon as a mild and interesting diversion for those who were able and desirous of buying one.

Like some race horses, these first cars were not "mudders", and it did not take much sticky road to stop them. One day, a neighbour of mine, Wm. Garrioch, was riding along on horseback and came up to a car that was hopelessly mired. There did not seem much he could do to help the situation, at least so the occupants thought, with a horse minus collar and harness. Taking off the stout halter shank, always a useful adjunct in emergencies, William simply attached one end of the rope to the car, and the other to the horse's tail, and in three shakes the car was on its way again. Had the horse any way of knowing that some day the evil-smelling affair that he had just helped out would push him almost completely off the road, would he have budged an inch?

Those early cars were not the dangerous juggernauts that we have to look out for today. Their speed was such that they could be controlled at all times, and they made enough noise to acquaint everyone within a mile of their approach. It was not a question of how soon they could get there, but whether they could get there. The casualty list of today caused by road accidents is something that causes great concern.

We live on a black-topped highway, and have to cross it to go to work. To stand at the cross-road and watch the traffic go by is revealing. Some drivers handle their vehicles with care and are in full control, able to stop in an emergency. About four in six are in this category, and about one in six is a careless driver and would be hard put to it to stop if he had to, to avoid trouble. The other one in six is a speed maniac and sooner or later comes to grief, or would if others were not on their guard for his type. Quite often a cow or a horse comes to grief on the road with loss to the farmer. Stock is bound to get loose occasionally in spite of all one can do. While trying to chase back some little pigs that had managed to root a way out of the pen the other day, two of them had crossed the road. An approaching car, though fully 150 yards away, and quite aware of what we were doing, never stopped or reduced his speed and smashed into them as we stood there, throwing one clean over the bridge.

Living on a highway has its advantages, but there are times when one could wish to be back away from it.

Most always there seems to be a car travelling just a few yards behind another and if it is about a six months later model than the one in front it is feverishly anxious to pass and cannot wait to get to the top of a hill. There is a road sign in England that says: "Undertakers love overtakers".

Recently I saw two cars pass by that were identical in year, model and color. The first one could not possibly allow the one behind to pass him. It would be an insult. On the other hand the second car could not remain in an inferior position. They could not travel neck and neck without trouble. It was a most distressing situation and worried me as much as it must have worried them.

THAT INSTITUTION—THE COUNTRY STORE

In these days of coffee breaks, early closing, long weekends, it makes an old-time store clerk realize that he was born fifty years too soon.

Working behind the counter in the winter after a summer of homestead duties, one put in long hours. The country store was, especially on a Saturday night, a kind of community hall and matters of local, even of national concern, were discussed and settled during sales.

It was never before midnight that the last dog was hung and the storekeeper given an excuse to draw the blinds and count the money in the till. Some of his customers, those living close to the village, did not contribute a great deal to the takings on this particular night, doing their buying during the week, and merely frequenting the store to see what was going on. Their usual practice was to reach in the convenient barrel of low-bush cranberries and secure a handful or commandeer an apple, and finally buy a plug of Macdonald's chewing tobacco at about five minutes to twelve, to square the account.

Good natured at all times a storekeeper had to be, no matter how tempted he was at times to blow his top. After all, he needed his customers as much or more than they needed him and he could not afford to lose them, that is, most of them.

When one fellow paid up his account after harvest one day, the boss handed him a cigar, a good one, all of ten cents. As the bill was around four hundred dollars, the farmer sniffed at the gift, and suggested that a measly ten-cent cigar was not much of a bonus for that amount of business. The storekeeper replied that it should be he on the receiving end, having carried the man on the books all summer at a certain risk that the harvest would not be as expected.

Butter and eggs were mostly the means of exchange in those days and these commodities were about as welcome as confederate money at one time in history. When one chap, whose wife kept the home going in groceries with such, looking over the stock of sheepskin coats on the counter, flatly declared that he could buy one cheaper at the mail-order house, he was given the opportunity. The boss's son, a stalwart chap, hustled him along the length of the store, and, reaching the door, cast him into the cold and unfriendly night. No way to conduct a business surely, but he was back the next Saturday as were the butter and eggs.

We were somewhat mystified one fall when several bachelors, who always stocked up on Saturday night for the coming week, suddenly acquired a great liking for canned corn. Instead of the usual couple of cans, they each bought a whole case of it. It was not long before our stock was exhausted and an urgent order dispatched to the wholesalers for more. Just as soon as the boom began, or shortly after, the depression set in. It came out that a case of corn had been wrongly labelled and upon being opened the cans were found to contain delicious strawberries. You never know, do you?

Well, now-a-days, if you are a woman, you push a wire carriage around a country store

The old-time store clerk was born too soon. It was never before midnight that the last dog was hung and the storekeeper given an excuse to draw the blinds and count the money in the till.

and pick up what you want, and some things you are not sure whether you do or not, but take them anyway if they are "specials". If you are a man, you keep out of the way and let the ladies do the shopping because you do not know where to find things and if you try, you only succeed in holding up the traffic.

TENT TOWN

Compared with such buildings as the Waldorf - Astoria, this edifice is rather second-class, but it looked good to the foot-weary land-seekers in 1898, at the end of a long trek to the Swan River district. With the nearest town over a hundred miles away and no road to speak of, a three-mile muskeg to negotiate, it was not possible to obtain lumber or other building material. The only power available is shown hanging up at the left in the shape of a buck saw. (Of all the thousands in use at that time, we can't find one for the Swan River museum.)

Mar Sam, the proprietor of this establishment (who spoke pigeon English fluently), could fry an egg with the best of chefs, and made good, strong, full-bodied coffee at all times, except when it rained, perhaps, the roof being far from watertight. Unlike the Waldorf previously mentioned, there was no class distinction in this salon. Settlers owning horse outfits rubbed shoulders with those who drove oxen, or in some cases, one of each.

The location was known as Tent Town, so called on account of two large marquees erected by the government for the convenience of settlers arriving before the railway.

The first storekeeper, Peter McKay, had a log building, 8 by 10 feet. There was no room in it for the customers, so they had to wait outside for their requirements and be served through the top half of the door. He even had to shave off his whiskers to provide a little more room. Only bare necessities could be carried as sometimes it took weeks to get through with supplies from the south. In the break-up and during wet weather, the teamsters often could not get through.

The first minister to reach Tent Town, Rev. E. Johnson, built himself a manse, 6 by 8 feet. At least that is what he thought he was building. He found, however, that inside it was only 5 by 7 feet. As he had figured to have his sleeping quarters at one end of it he was obliged to cut some out of the logs in order to make room for his head and feet.

He was quite comfortable in there and found great satisfaction in being free from the onslaughts of the mosquitoes on hot summer nights. He could hear the inmates of the tents walking about with smudge pails and saying nasty things about the little pests on nights when they were particularly bad. Mosquitoes are very persistent things, but the son of the manse

was free of them and had no reason to be tempted to say words he had not heard at college.

We all make mistakes at times, and in chinking up his little log building, he had run out of either time or chinks, and so had filled one particularly large crack with some hay and had plugged it tight.

One very sultry night, about at the break of day, he was awakened by the sound of a cowbell, an animal brought in by a newcomer who had not had time to get established and keep his animal under control. The animal was loaded with mosquitoes. It also was looking for some nourishment and, wrapping its tongue around the rope of nice hay, she pulled it out and ate it. The mosquitoes, so long thwarted, swarmed in and made up for lost time. That is, the females did. Entomologists tell us that it is only the lady mosquitoes that bite, the males being vegetarian. They do buzz, however, which is nearly as bad. And how can one tell the difference when half asleep?

In fairness to the lady mosquitoes, it should be said that, according to all accounts, they do not bite out of meanness but only do it for a square meal.

Tent town was in existence near Swan River for about two years, and then the railway came. The town was established about a mile to the east, and no sign of the early settlement remains.

Tent Town.

STORIED HOMES OF YESTERYEAR

Houses, like the people that build them, grow old and decay. As one travels around the country and sees old dwellings by the road, with windows boarded up and doors off the hinges, it makes one wonder what history lies behind them and if they could speak what tales they could tell.

Who built this house shown in the picture and lived in it, and where are they now? Do they still think of it, and do they, with Thomas Hood still remember—"the little window where the sun came peeping in at morn?"

Well, we could tell them a little about it. If it is usable at all the little window will have a truck backed up to it and grain thrown in through it, to stay there until the time comes for the surplus to be reduced. Not many old houses were built to last for long, especially in the west, for practically no attention to foundations was given and when a building is unoccupied it soon goes to ruin. With extreme climatic conditions working from the top and burrowing animals from below, the proudest edifice will soon be a wreck.

Proudest, did I say? I would imagine that the builder of this small house thought a lot of that dormer window he put in, and I can see him backing up quite often to have a look at it from the road. The kids at school would crow over the other kids whose parents neglected, or were not

"Ain't gonna need this ole house no more."

clever enough, to make a window in the roof so as to be able to look out over the countryside and see what was going on.

This old log house being moved can remember a good deal. The dance held in it when completed, with the youngsters along with everybody's clothes, piled on the bed in the corner. The horses and oxen tied to the trees outside. It can remember the big threshing gangs making away with the piled-up food on the table. The master of the house getting up on a wet cold night to light a lantern and go chase the cattle out of the crop. The chatter and laughter of the children when home from school and the gathering of the clan at Christmas time.

Now, everyone gone, it wanted to be left with its memories, and remain unmolested.

However, someone had other ideas. Moved to another site it would still be useful and would make a good pig pen. The roof was still in good shape although the two bottom rounds of logs were gone.

What? Keep smelly pigs in it? Not to be thought of for a moment. What an insult.

So it was, that when it was jacked up and a tractor hitched to it, it refused to budge an inch. Another tractor was called for, and, although a little progress was made, it was not long before it came to a complete standstill. So the cold-blooded, hard-hearted wretches brought still another tractor into play and a slow tortuous trek across the field was begun.

Fortune, looking down on the uneven struggle, smiled openly as the bandits found that the old house would not pass under the hydro wires. This difficulty overcome after a long delay, the old house finally, reluctantly, came to rest.

Sympathetic reader, rest assured that no smelly hogs are going to root inside those hallowed walls. Why could not someone have told the silly old thing that the building was wanted for a very worthy and appropriate purpose, and as a museum will be around perhaps when most of us are not.

Starting out on a new life.

IS MAN MOVING TOO FAST?

Man is the only animal that goes faster than nature intended him to. According to the evolutionists, he is the immediate descendant of an ape-like creature. Just when and how the cleavage took place that embarked man on his upward climb, leaving the brute beasts so far behind, has not been satisfactorily explained by the theorists, though not from want of trying.

It has perhaps taken millions of years to bring this change about, but have we reached the end of the upward surge? Is there any danger of slipping back to the former state?

Looking recently at some exhibits of what has become known as modern realist art, one could not help but feel that the downward trend has already set in. To see what appeared to be a number of fried eggs rampaging on a field of brown toast, and then to find that the painting was meant to represent William the Conqueror landing in Britain, gives cause for alarm. The cave dwellers of fifteen thousand years ago carved and drew pictures that could be recognized at a glance.

Monkey or not to begin with, man was provided with two legs and of all creatures was the least satisfied with the speed with which he could get from one place to another. As many other beasts could outrun him easily, he brought some of them under subjection to him and made their speed his own. The horse became his chief delight, and for years without number this noble animal was the means employed to get about from place to place in time-saving comfort. Not until the steam locomotive made its appearance was the horse directly challenged and then only in a limited way.

Now, of course, the astonishing changes in mode of travel, all in one's own lifetime have left the horse almost standing still. Even as a draft animal he has been side-tracked until today he is somewhat of a rarity. Yet what chrome-plated upholstered car can take the place of a spanking dapple grey horse, stepping lively on a morning, with head thrown back and tail over the dashboard? How does the sound of a car horn compare with the jingle of sleigh bells and what can you see from a car window of the countryside with your eyes on the road, in comparison to the more leisurely gait of the horse that enjoys the open road as much as you do.

Alas, no roads any more on which a horse can travel. Blacktop, fringed by beer and pop bottles is too hard on a horse's tender feet.

Will some enterprising provincial government some day build roads with a dirt road running parallel to it for those who would like to use it?

EARLY TELEGRAPH LINE

The young lady in the picture, daughter of one of the district's earliest settlers, is holding a small coil of wire (taken with some difficulty from trees in which it had been embedded). This

is no ordinary wire but is some of the wire used over 80 years ago to form telegraphic connection between Selkirk near Winnipeg and Fort Livingstone, the headquarters of the N.W.M.P., and to Fort Pelly of the H.B.C. It was then to run westward to the South Saskatchewan at Clark's Crossing, then via Battleford on the North Saskatchewan to near Fort Edmonton (H.B.C.) and to the Yellowhead Pass through the Rockies. As we know, this route was abandoned for one farther south. For eight years, however, Pelly and Livingstone used the telegraph line to great advantage, after which it fell into disuse. Farmers used a lot of it for fencing and William Sifton took some of it and twisted it into a cable for use in hauling the ferry across the narrows, where it still lies on the rocks beneath the water. Some of this wire I saw wrapped around the antlers of a fine elk. This animal died a cruel death from starvation as did a moose the same way. Probably many more.

The framed letter that the lady is holding was written at the time of construction of the right-of-way of the railroad to follow by one of the surveyors, evidently by the man in charge of a gang. One can imagine some of the difficulties encountered on this job, especially during the summer months, with swamps to negotiate and flies and mosquitoes to battle. How difficult it must have been to get supplies to them as they drew away from their base. It was this problem that caused this letter to be written. The Indians were friendly on the whole, though it is not likely that they relished having the white man slashing about everywhere, building railways through their long-accustomed locations. During the rebellion the wire was cut in many places by the rebels.

As the letter is informative and rather amusing, we give it here verbatim. (When Fort Pelly was abandoned in 1907, many such letters were left in the building, some of them over a century old. Though not considered very valuable at the time, they have become so now).

"Dear Mr. McBeath:

"I have to thank you very much for coming to my rescue with grub when I sent Mr. Layton into Pelly last time. We were craving for meat.

"I am sending in Wm. Linklater today for more supplies, and doubtless mine have arrived by this time if the Sioux have not captured them on the road. If mine really have not arrived yet, I must trust to your doing the best for me again.

"This last is the most difficult 24 miles of line I ever surveyed, but I must not grumble as the work has turned out very accurate, which, of course, is the main thing. Linklater thinks our line is going to cross the Devil's Lake about 5 miles further west. As —— has not turned up I suppose that humbug of a telegraph line is lying down in the swamp where they ought to leave

The young lady shown here, daughter of one of the district's earliest settlers, holds a coil of wire (obtained with difficulty from the trees where it was strung) which once carried the telegraph messages from Selkirk to Fort Livingstone, Manitoba.

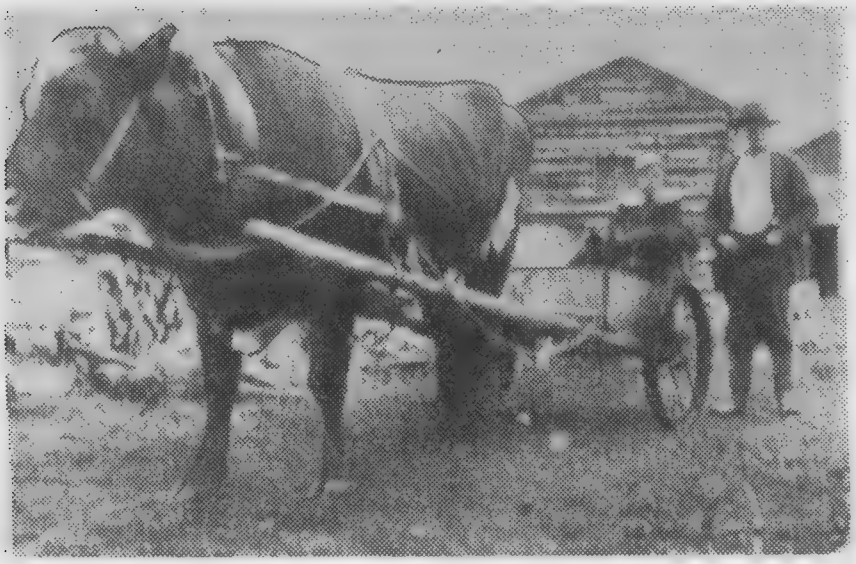
it for travellers to hang on to when crossing the bad places. McDermot has brought no mail either, so there is five dollars saved anyway.

"Would you kindly send my letters down by the first chance you may get. I suppose you are quite rich now—grabbed all that treaty money of course.

"We expect the country to become more open and drier every day now. Sorry I have not time to come and pay your hospitable old fort a visit. May meet you at Ellice on my way down. Please send me out —— account and after he leaves you to come out don't give anything more for his wife or himself so that I may know what balance to pay him. If he likes she may draw $4 a week and if so, please mention it in account and when the time begins.

Yours sincerely, A. L. Russell."

THE DAY OF THE OXEN



The old-time oxen were hardly built for speed and had a habit of heading for home whenever they caught their driver asleep. Still and all, there was no trouble with punctures with the ox-team and cart and no worry about soiling new upholstery, which consisted of a bag of potatoes.

The year is 1900, and my neighbor is all set for a trip to town that will take all day; a journey that can now be made in less than 60 minutes. But who cared in those days. There was absolutely nothing to worry about, no fear of engine trouble, or a flat tire, and no danger of soiling the seat cover, which consisted of a bag of potatoes.

There was one thing to be careful of though, a hazard that has persisted to this day; that of falling asleep at the wheel. On a hot summer's day, with no noisy traffic to remind one to keep alert, one was apt to doze off. Old Napoleon, like all other oxen, had no use for town where every dog came barking and snapping, and where there was no place to lie down and chew the cud. So, swinging his head around under the pretext of knocking off a fly or mosquito he would look to see what the driver was doing, and if he appeared to be asleep, he was liable to turn around and make for home. Old Alec would wake up when the wheels stopped turning, to find himself back in his yard.

Oxen were home-loving beasts as I knew them, and if turned loose would seldom stray further afield than the nearest neighbor's wheat patch. If taken to a new place, they had to get used to it before they could be trusted to stay around and not return to their former hebitation.

I once bought a team from a homesteader 25 miles away, and not having a stable built, I pushed them into the shack I lived in as it was around Christmastime and cold. They at one end of the shanty and myself at the other with the stove between us, I like to think of as a case of central heating. Next morning I took them down to the river for a drink, and they waited patiently while I chopped a hole in the ice. After they had filled up I dipped myself a pail of water and, on turning round, saw that they were on the move at a faster clip than usual. They were tied together

by the horns so I ran after them and caught them by the tails, hoping to get between them and get them by the head. Past the shack and down the trail, plunging through deep snow we went, for about two miles. I had had enough by this time, so I let go and turned for home. Looking back, I saw that they had managed to wrap themselves round a poplar tree, so I got them back after all, but it was a job and I wished that I could have been in two places at once.

This reminds me of a couple of young fellows named Loat who had quite a streak of misfortune, coming into the Valley in the spring of 1899 with a team of young steers they had bought at Dauphin, a young town about a hundred miles away. As the late Rev. Johnson tells it in his diary of them, they were practically high-school boys, had come from Toronto and decided to make their way out here and take up land. No farming experience at all.

With a friendly helper they constructed a home-made sled out of green poplar trees growing along the Vermilion River. On this they loaded their outfit, sacks of flour, camp stove, etc. As they made their way over the mountain trail all went well, crossing rivers and creeks, until they came to Duck River, thirty miles from their destination. On it the ice was broken and the water was running. They constructed a bridge by cutting down two tall trees, which reached across the narrow river. Then they unloaded the sled and put the runners outside the logs, hitching the steers up, one on each side of the logs. When part of the way over, their crude sled spread, runners came apart, and dumped almost all of their load into the icy river. They came into the Valley with the steers and a few things they managed to salvage, but their summer supplies were gone and most of their money wrapped up in them.

So, one of the boys had to turn around and find a job, leaving the other one, Herbert, on the homestead to do some breaking. Mosquitoes so bad he had to build a corral and make a smudge in it every night to keep the steers quiet. When he had broken about five acres, he arose one morning to find they had broken out of the fence and were gone. Although he spent valuable time looking for them he did not hear of them again until the fall of the year when a message came that they had arrived at their old home, over a hundred miles away.

In the meantime, he had managed to procure some potatoes and planted his five acres with them. He harvested 500 bushels which sold at a dollar a bushel, so did not do too badly after all.

A LOST ART

How very sad it is to realize that most of our young people in the rural districts are growing up without ever having the pleasure of a buggy ride behind a pair of fast-stepping horses. Never had a pair of lines in their hands, or learned how to click their tongues in an understandable fashion. To never know the difference between a check-rein and a rain-check.

Harnessing a horse is fast becoming a lost art and breast-straps and belly-bands are now only obtainable at drug stores. When we hear people say that so-and-so should be horse-whipped

The good old days! Dashing along a country road at 8 miles an hour in a covered buggy, behind a high-stepping team was a mighty fine experience.

because of the way he treats his wife, we know that it is only a figure of speech, for where today could one buy a horsewhip? By the way, where are all those people that used to make buggy whips? At one time there were enough of them to make up a fair-sized town. And the harness-makers? When this town was just a village of 400 souls, we had two such shops and a livery barn right on Main Street, and the store that did not have hitching posts in front of it was a curiosity. The only ride on a horse for our grandchildren now possible, or nearly so, is on the roundabouts at the fair. The only horse on most farms today is the sawhorse, and that is also becoming a rarity.

What are the village horseshoe pitchers going to use for their fun when the ones they now have are worn out? These are questions that should be occupying the minds of our public-spirited citizens who sometimes wonder what to be exercised about.

When King Richard the Third frantically offered his kingdom for a horse at the Battle of Bosworth Field, he did not want any mechanical contrivance. He was afoot, deserted by his friends, and surrounded by enemies who were on horseback. Had he been also mounted he would doubtless have been able to wield his mighty sword with such effect as to enable him to win to safety. Had he done so, it would have saved me a lot of needless search some hundreds of years later.

King Richard did get a horse later on that day, but too late to do him any good. His mutilated body was thrown over the back of a horse to take his remains into town. As his foes passed along the highway that now bears the name of King Richard's Road, his head was supposedly dislodged from his body, to fall into the river Soar. So at least reads the plaque on the side of the bridge. Many hours have I spent looking for it without success.

The car will never take the place of the horse altogether. If you are lost in a blinding snowstorm and do not know which way to turn, will an automobile start off at a word of command and take you home?

Ha! The joy of the open road in the spring of the year, when the wind is blowing in your face, and the horses are shedding their winter coat and you get a mouthful of hair—but whose fault is that?

CLOTHES AND THE MAN

Mark Twain once said that he had travelled around a good deal, had mixed with royalty and savages and common ordinary people, and that one thing struck him wherever he went . . . "clothes make the man, naked people have little or no influence in society."

I was in the army and I discovered that there was no apparent difference between a sergeant and a private soldier when in swimming, and not until they put on their clothes could they be told apart.

In the first world war, military standards were high at the beginning when it was thought that the war would be over by the first Christmas. As the war dragged on the standards were lowered and any man that could stand up on his feet without hanging on to something was then accepted. As I did not qualify in those early stages I found it necessary to pay my own way overseas and enlist in England. As a consequence I had my civilian clothes with me in camp for some time and one day I put them on and took a walk through the camp. Meeting any officers I merely bade them good morning instead of saluting them and they in turn bade me a good morning.

It must be very disconcerting at a nudist colony when introduced to a person dressed only in a pair of ear-rings or wrapped up in a big cigar, to engage them in conversation. No fraternity pin or clue of any kind to show where their interests lie. Are they lovers of the Bard of Avon or more concerned with the high cost of fish and chips. There is no clue. Dressed up they could be classified.

Now one would not be at a loss to size up this man in our picture. Here is a man of the woods who would know his way about and be able to live off the country. He could light a fire without matches as he carries a fire-bag. A good judge of fur and a keen trader with the natives. being able to talk in their own language. Probably part Indian himself and by the look of his ornamental dress is no doubt married to a native woman who must be clever and industrious to make such lovely clothing. A dead shot with a rifle and woe betide any animal likely to cross his path if he is in need of food. All this we gather from the way he is dressed. And in all this we would be wrong.

Notice the look of disdain on the dog's face. He knows quite well that this man is merely having his picture taken in another man's clothes and that he probably would starve to death if lost in the bush. The dog deplores the vanity of man, wanting to appear what he is not. This man is a captain of a steamboat plying the lakes from Cumberland House to Red River Settlement, hauling fish to the towns near the border and looks more natural in a blue serge suit and a peaked cap. Well, he is not the only one that has had his picture taken in these clothes and who

wouldn't like to? A lot of patient work and long hours have gone into making these beautiful garments. The dog does not realize all this.

Dead-eye Dick?

MAKING MANITOBA MAPLE SYRUP

About this time of the year some of us think of maple syrup making, and a few of us remember the good times we had in Ontario or Quebec when the business started, usually towards the end of March. Not many are aware, however, that a very fine syrup can be made from the Manitoba maple, or box elder, as it is called. "Acer Negundo" to give it its botanical name. A fine syrup can also be made from the birch tree. I make syrup from both species every year.

The Manitoba maple extends from east of Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba to the source of the Red Deer and Bow rivers in Alberta, though not very far north. It is a poor affair as a tree compared to the eastern sugar maple though when cultivated and trimmed it can develop into quite a large tree.

Long before white settlers came the Indians discovered the possibilities of it and made syrup and sugar for themselves. How they managed to evaporate it without iron kettles would be interesting to know, because it takes forty g allons of sap to make one gallon of syrup. They probably let the warm summer sun do the job. After the Hudson's Bay Company and the Nor-West Company brought in iron kettles and other tools it became quite an industry as refined sugar was hard to obtain and every spring the Indians and employees of the fur-trading posts would get to work. They made large quantities.

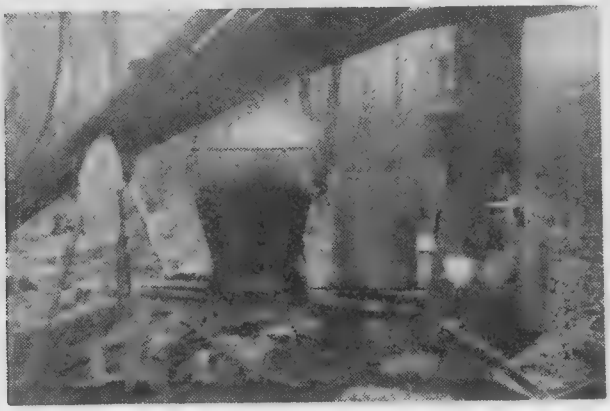
Probably I tap in the same area that Daniel Harman speaks about in his Journal, written in 1801. He speaks of his people being flooded out on the banks of the Swan River, and being forced to leave their sugar-making. The same thing has happened to me. He also said that in his opinion the syrup of the Manitoba maple was not equal to that of his native Vermont. It is different, I know, but both have distinctive qualities. Large quantities of sugar were made from the Manitoba tree by the natives and the companies were eager for it. They handled thousands of pounds every year and exported part of it to England.

How does this western tree compare with the proper maple as regards amount of sap? It runs about the same, 35 to 40 gallons to 1, or 2½ per cent sugar content. Of course, the big maple will give three gallons of sap on a good day where a Manitoba maple about the size of a 6-inch stovepipe will yield half a gallon. Yet a maple with about half a dozen trunks to it will carry a can on each trunk and will give as much as the sugar maple.

I generally tap about a hundred trees. I could do more, but I do it all without help and do not bother with a horse, just interested in making enough for ourselves and for relatives and friends. It is not a paying business but comes when there is nothing else to do and is interesting.

Many Ontario farmers with sugar maple groves do not bother to light a fire in their sugar houses any more, what with the cost of labor and materials, but just make a little at the house for their own use.

I have a proper evaporator, a small one, so can evaporate rather quickly, but a wash boiler on the kitchen range will provide you with a taste. I use honey pails to catch the sap. A quarter-inch bit is plenty big enough for small trees, and should only be driven in a third of an inch. Drill about 3 feet from the ground or mice will get into the pail. Drive a V-shaped piece of galvanized tin under the hole and a lath nail to hold the can.



Maple sugar making. F. A. Twilley, Swan River, Manitoba.

Wood is the big problem, but as my trees are all along the river bank and as there are several places where I can find a hundred trees, I move about from year to year and look for a good driftwood pile brought down by the waters.

If you find some big trees, the bark will be too rough and hard for a piece of tin to penetrate. You will need a bigger bit and must make a spout from a cranberry stalk and scrape out the soft centre. I have proper sap spouts for those trees.

The time to start is early in April, just when it feels like sap-running time and just before the river starts to run. The first days are the best and should be taken advantage of. A sharp frost at night and a warm day following and it will keep you busy.

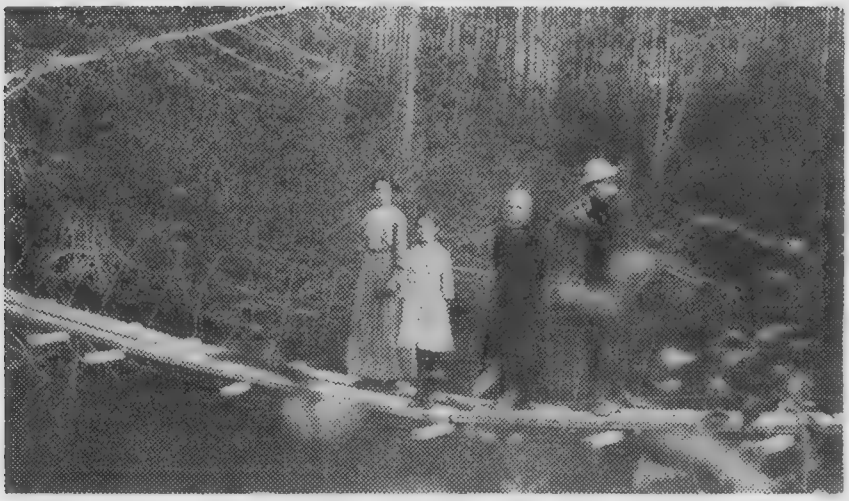
If you have had a good run of sap, and you are getting tired of the job, a matter of about three weeks, then quit, especially if the sap has a yellowish tinge to it and the hole begins to gum up. A small hole made by a ¼-inch bit, if not drilled too far in, will not hurt the tree at all. The sap-suckers will make a dozen such holes when they arrive. When you tap, do it on the side that carries the most branches, but whenever possible, on the south side facing the sun.

With regard to the syrup, if boiled fairly quick, it will be of a golden color, much lighter than the Ontario variety. If you want to make it into sugar you should have a thermometer. If you want to try without one, boil to a thick syrup without stirring, then allow to cool so it will not burn your finger and then stir it into sugar.

As to the birch tree, it makes a dark sweet syrup, but has less sugar content—1½ per cent. Don't bother with it. Its only advantage, it does not depend on frosty nights, will give enormous amounts of sap, sometimes, and does not start running until the maple trees are ready to quit.

So, if you have a few maple trees around and you have a few jam or honey pails in the house, make yourselves a little taste of syrup on the kitchen stove and see how you like it.

THE BRIDGE BUILDERS



Many bridges have been famed in books and movies—the Bridge of San Luis Rey, the Bridge on the River Kwai, and others, but it's doubtful if any were more essential, or more romantic, to those concerned than early western bridges such as this.

When the first school districts were formed around Swan River, Manitoba, 60 years ago, temporary bridges had to be built in order to have the youngsters attend.

Now bridge building is an art in which a good deal of planning is necessary. There are laws to be observed, failing to comply with which can lead to disaster. Different types of structures call for special consideration. Is the bridge contemplated to be a suspension bridge, a cantilever or one resting on piers, abutments and foundations? To be checked is the tensile strength of materials, ultimate ability to resist shearing, modulus of elasticity, linear expansion, moment of inertia, etc. As the municipality was only willing to pay 45 dollars for construction we had to forget about most of this and get on with it.

In the picture, as you can see, we are testing the bridge for stress, giving it more than it would be likely to take if the kids went over it one at a time, which of course they wouldn't. Anyhow, it was built too low and was soon washed away in the spring flood.

The next one was much higher, with three steps up to it, and it lasted until a traffic bridge was built. This one gave good service and was only out of commission once, the time that a bunch of wasps built a nest right in the middle of it. It meant a dip in the river carrying an oily rag to burn them out. Even so, they managed to get in a few stings.

When the Brooklyn bridge was built, as with other large undertakings, many lives were lost and others injured. The only casualty in our case was a crack on the jaw when the 2x4 that I was using to twist a guy wire slipped from my hand and caught me on the chin. I had to walk to town to get it stitched. Local anesthetics were not used in those days or were not common, and the doctor plied his needle to the tune of "Here we suffer grief and pain." I responded feebly with "Oh what needless pain we bear." After fixing me up, he bade me return in ten days to have the stitches removed. When I did so, I found he was on vacation and to take them out with a razor in front of a mirror I found, being cat-gut, quite a difficult job.

Some districts, needing a bridge, used 2 or 3 old wagon gears placed in the river and fastened together with logging chains with a plank walk across them. This made a good solid bridge but was often overflowed in high water and in any case had to be taken out every fall.

Rev. E. W. Johnson, in his memoirs, tells of the Doukhobors coming to Tent Town. A Russian nobleman that befriended them had been in the summer before and had made a deal with the government for land for them just across the border between Manitoba and what is now Saskatchewan. Two log buildings had been erected for them at the camp. A large company of these people came to the end of the steel in the spring. They walked up through mud and water as far as the Favelle River but they could not get across the flowing water. The young Russian who had charge of them was resourceful, and sought for a rope to span the river. One could not be found long enough so two were tied together. His plan was to attach these to trees on opposite banks and run a pulley on them with a rope seat on the pulley hook and so ferry his people over the water. The knot in the middle necessitated two pulleys which of course meant getting out of one loop into another in the middle of the stream. And did not some of those big fat women make that rope sag in the middle. Their eyes stuck out when they thought they were actually

going to reach the water. Eventually all were safely landed and with glad hearts escorted to their huts.

The "bridge" remained the avenue of traffic until the river was low enough to ford.

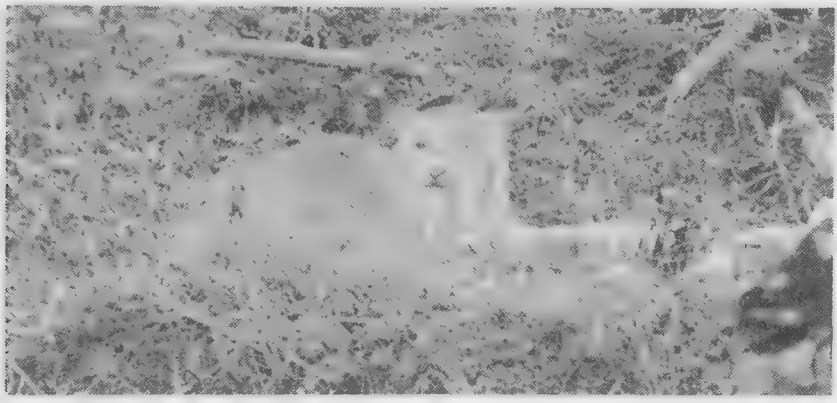
THE PHILOSOPHY OF KINDNESS TO ANIMALS

It pays to be kind to dumb animals no matter how dumb they may be. You will be rewarded by their trustfulness even though you may not trust them.

How often do we see farmers attempting to load hogs for market into a wagon box, hollering and whooping and brandishing a stick with little success. To back up the box to the chute a day or two ahead and put the feed into it is the sensible thing to do. It is surprising how quickly they will scamper into it when you open the end gate on shipping day, though nothing to be compared to the speed with which they will come out again if you don't look sharp in shutting it.

To take a whip to oxen is indeed a poor return for the many faithful days of toil they render. A stick with a nail on the end of it is much less noticed but should only be used in emergencies, which occur quite often.

Kindness to all dumb creatures, even though repulsive to us as some may be, is always rewarding. Readers may remember the story of the man in the iron mask who was thrown into a dungeon to never again know freedom. Little light in his cell, no one to speak to, never to see a living soul except the warder. One day he was surprised yet glad to see a lean and hungry rat come up out of a hole near where he used to sit the weary hours away. He gave it some of his meagre food and watched it greedily devour it. Soon they became fast friends and he looked eagerly to its coming. As the days wore on, the rodent partook of more and more of the prisoner's food. It grew fatter and fatter as the unhappy man became thinner, until one day the creature was too fat to get back down its hole but the man was so thin that it was no trouble at all to him



and so was able to reach safety and see the blessed sunlight once more.

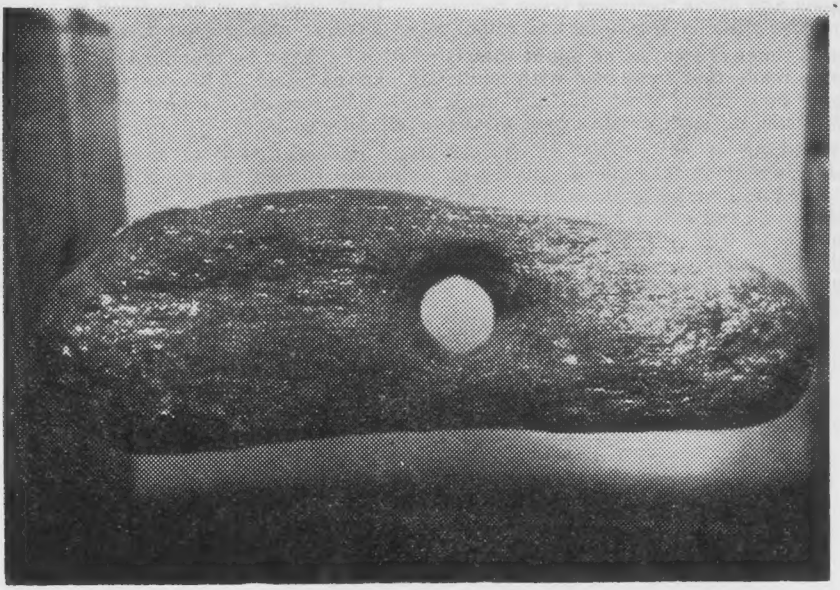
We have all heard of Androcles, a Roman slave who used to lead about the streets a lion that had forborne to injure him when turned loose upon him in the circus. The story is related by an eye-witness (name on request) who states that Androcles, having taken refuge from the severities of his master in a cave in Africa, a lion entered the cave and presented to him his swollen paw, from which he extracted a large thorn.

How nice it would be if we could have a lion to safeguard us in these troublous times. With robberies and attacks with violence becoming so prevalent it is unfortunate indeed. But we do have bears. Saw one last week on our own farm, eating choke cherries, but was in no immediate need of help. There are cases however of bears, foraging around garbage dumps, putting their heads into cans and not being able to get their heads out again. In struggling, matters only become worse, and if nothing is done to help them, they will come to grief and likely die of starvation. One cannot just go up to the animal without precaution. The animal must be tied to a tree or something first and petted, or tranquilized. After removing the can, and the bear follows you to lick your hand, it cannot do so without being untied, and it may become necessary to put the can back on again while you loosen the rope.

There has to be, of course, some co-operation between man and beast for these acts of kindness to be successful. The animal in the picture, a lynx, has had the misfortune to put its leg in a steel trap. It wants to be free again, to roam the woods in sheer abandon. We all know

about that. The only way he can be let loose is for someone, not me, to press down the springs and cause the jaws of the trap to open. That is all. Here is a case where the utmost co-operation between man and beast is required if the result is to be a happy one for both parties. It does not seem, from the look on the creature's face that this will be forthcoming.

THE HAMMER-MAKERS



This is a stone hammer-head of ancient British origin and looks like it would be of more use in pounding skulls than nails.

Most everyone has seen, both in museums and in private collections, arrowheads, hammers, scrapers and other tools made of stone. Many farmers have picked them up themselves while walking over their summerfallow. This is nothing remarkable as we in Canada are not very far removed from the Stone Age.

The most indispensable tool, whether made of stone or iron, is the hammer and early Stone Age man soon found out that putting a handle on a stone would give him greater striking power and remove the jar to the body that a stone held in the hand always gave him.

Our Indians made many kinds of hammers and collections of those interested in such things are not rare. I have a large collection of them and some I have are rather unusual, or so people tell me. I have one smaller than a good sized walnut and from that on to really big pemmican pounders that one man (or woman, as men did not do much hard work), could not handle but would require two of them.

The general pattern was a shaped stone with a groove around the centre. Most often the groove went all around but in some cases one end was not grooved. It all depended on the kind of handle the maker wished to put on it. If twisted willow was to be used for the handle, the groove went round three sides only and in other cases where a solid handle bound by green rawhide was used, the groove went all around.

Sometimes the groove was not made in the centre but towards one end. It all depended on what the implement was to be used for. In what we call "axes," there would be no groove but raised flanges to hold the handle.

There would be many different uses to which hammers would be put, calling for many shapes and sizes. Hammers for breaking bones to get at the marrow, for obtaining fuel, for driving pegs, and pounding dried meat into pemmican.

Stones were specially shaped for use as weapons of defence and offence. The coup stick and the cowie stick were deadly weapons at close quarters, the former being a two bitted round and rather blunt stone with short handle and the latter worked to a much sharper point with a longer handle. The coup stick was used with great effect against General Custer's army, Crazy

Horse claiming to have accounted for 23 victims with it. Custer had commanded his troops to leave behind their swords so as not to make a rattling noise and so alarm the enemy. When the ammunition ran out the empty rifles proved unwieldy as clubs as compared to the weapons of the Sioux.

Over in Europe, it is a far cry from the Age of Flint and Neolithic Man to the Age of Iron and Steel, but unknown to many, out on the hill tops, often just out of the big cities, burial mounds of these men who lived and loved and fought, long before the coming of the Roman legions, can be located and evidence found of their way of life.

The seeker after these antiquities. whether he be impelled by curiosity or by the reasoned quest of the archaeologist will be able to find some interesting material without too much difficulty.

I am in touch with two men at widely different parts of Britain who are quite successful in finding artefacts. This is remarkable when we consider the many thousands of years since the flint tools and stone hammers were fashioned. Both these men have lived in Canada, one in Alberta and the other in Manitoba and found relics here, so giving them the incentive.

The hammer shown, as no doubt that is what it is, must be thousands of years old. While it is a poorly made tool compared with what our natives made, it is notable on account of age, as tools have been found most skilfully made and it is remarkable how alike prehistoric man formed his ideas, no matter what part of the world he was in.

The making of an arrowpoint or spearpoint calls for skill of the highest order but it seems a simple matter to make a scraper or hammer. I selected a nicely rounded stone found in the river bed and with the aid of a chipping hammer, formed a nice groove around the centre. With a little sand and water and a thong of leather, all that remained to do was to smooth the groove and the job was done. As I gave the stone a few more taps it fell into two halves at my feet. Evidently there is more to the job than one thinks. I have a stone in my lot that has a mark around the middle and partly grooved out and then discarded. Evidently the maker did not like the sound of it or something.